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Morte Arthure.

Morte Arthure.

EDITED FROM

ROBERT THORNTON'S MS. (AB. 1440 A.D.)

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BY

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PREFACE.

It is confessedly almost impossible to fix on the exact point of time when the Semi-Saxon dialect, which had replaced the more formal Anglo-Saxon after the Norman Conquest, passed into the *Early English*. Those characteristic changes which constitute the *modernization* of a language were proceeding gradually. Inflections were being lost, distinctive marks of gender and case neglected, variations of meaning coming to be expressed rather by combinations of words than by changes in the words themselves, and the result was that about the middle of the thirteenth century England was speaking a language differing by a wide interval from that of the country three centuries before. This *Early English* stage of the language may be considered to extend from about the beginning of the reign of Henry III. to the end of that of Edward III., when it was succeeded by the *Middle English*.¹ During the whole of this period continual modification of the English tongue was going on. The language of the proclamation to the people of Huntingdonshire differs greatly from the language of Chaucer, and even from

¹ See Dr. Latham on "The English Language," chap. iii.; and "Hallam's Introduction to Literature of Europe," chap. i.

that of Piers Plowman and of the poem which is here put forth. It is probable that the *Morte Arthure* is somewhat later in date than Piers Plowman, but that it still falls within the period marked out for the limits of *Early English*. In comparing together the writings of this date we are at once struck by a distinction which seems to separate them into two classes. In Chaucer we see the tendency towards foreign words and idioms, and the adoption of the rhyming metre invented during the decay of the Latin tongue; in Piers Plowman and the *Morte Arthure* we trace the prevalence of the Saxon words and rhythm, the alliterative¹ or accented metre being preferred to the final cadence.

In the judgment of Warton the latter style was an evident and palpable barbarism. This critic severely censures the author of Piers Plowman, and, but that he was unacquainted with the *Morte Arthure*, would doubtless have included its author also in his condemnation—"Instead of availing himself of the rising and rapid improvements of the English language Longland prefers and adopts the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets. Nor did he make these writers the models of his language only: he likewise imitates their alliterative versification, which consisted in using an aggregate of words beginning with the same letter. But this imposed constraint of seeking identical initials and the affectation of obsolete English, by demanding a constant and necessary departure from the natural and obvious forms of expression, contributed also to render his manner extremely perplexed, and to disgust the readers with obscurities."² It is hoped that the readers of the following poem will not be so

¹ "Alliteration is the general character of all the early Gothic metres."—*Latham*.

² *Warton's History of English Poetry*, i. 266.

readily disgusted ; those very obscurities which were so distasteful to the polite critic constituting some of the chief recommendation of the composition. It is hoped also that the poem will be welcomed not only on philological and grammatical grounds, but on the ground also of its own intrinsic merit —for the fire, vigour, and liveliness of its style, and the vast profusion of descriptive epithets which it pours out before the reader.

This version of the *Morte Arthure* is printed from a manuscript in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, commonly known as the “Thornton Romances.” It is a thick volume containing several poems of the Arthur type, as well as many pieces in prose, both English and Latin. The greater part of this volume was written by Robert Thornton, a native of Oswaldkirk, in Yorkshire, and Archdeacon of Bedford in the Diocese of Lincoln, about the middle of the fifteenth century. The date of Archdeacon Thornton and his connection with Lincoln Cathedral can be ascertained pretty accurately, as among the archives of the Cathedral there is preserved an instrument or deed of considerable importance, attested by him as Archdeacon, which bears date 1439.¹

So valuable is this collection of ancient pieces which has been preserved by the labour of the Archdeacon, that doubtless all lovers of antiquity will be willing to concur in the wish with which the *Morte Arthure* concludes, “Thornton dictus sit benedictus.” The poem with which we are now concerned was first published from the Lincoln manuscript by Mr. Halli-

¹ This instrument is known by the name of the “*Laudum of Alnwick*,” and to this day every Prebendary of the Church takes oath on his admission to observe it. It is a decree (*id quod laudatum est*, approved or determined) of Bishop Alnwick, in reference to certain matters in dispute between the Dean and the Canons.

well in the year 1847. The form which was then adopted was that of an expensive quarto, and the value of the book was sought to be further enhanced by a rigid limitation of the issue to seventy-five copies. These have all, probably, long ago found their way into the great libraries of the country, and the poem has become as inaccessible to the general reader as though it had never been printed. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Early English Text Society have judged it desirable that a re-publication of the poem should be made. The present edition differs from that of Mr. Halliwell in the printing of two of his lines in one, in the marking by italic letters all expansions of the manuscript contractions, and the addition of side-notes and a glossary. In the first of these points the arrangement of the manuscript is followed, the lines being always written there as here printed. A comparison of the two methods will also, it is thought, result in a decided preference, as regards rhythm, of the method here used. With respect to the expansions of the contractions, it will be observed that there is no regularity in the spelling used, a final *e* being sometimes appended to words, sometimes not. Great care has, in fact, been taken to reproduce exactly the *irregularity* which is one of the most marked features of the spelling of this manuscript. In no case has a final *e* been added unless indicated by a strong and decided mark; while the threefold variation in the writing of words beginning with *th* has been carefully followed.¹ The form of

¹ *The, This, That, Thus, Thou, Thi, These, etc.*, are sometimes written in this manuscript as at present spelled, sometimes with the *Y* and the final letter put over it, sometimes with the *Y* and the other letters following in a line; *e.g.* *That, Yt, Yat, This, Ys, Yis.* In the second of these cases the letters are printed in italic; in the third in roman type.

the thorn letter (þ) has been adopted in the printing, instead of the form used in the manuscript (Y), as it has been thought more agreeable to the date of the composition, and more in unison with the other publications of the same period printed by the E.E.T.S. There can be no doubt that the two forms represent substantially the same sound. The text having undergone several careful collations with the manuscript, it is hoped that it is as near perfect as may be. In some few points it will be found to differ from the very accurate edition of Mr. Halliwell.

As to the poem itself, it is held by Sir F. Madden that this is the “*Gret gest of Arthure*” composed by Huchowne, a Scotch ballad writer of the fourteenth century. This opinion is combated by Mr. Morris in his Preface to “*Alliterative Poems*,” who proves that the poem was not originally written in the Scotch dialect, but in one of the Northumbrian dialects spoken South of the Tweed. Mr. Morris is also of opinion that the text of the poem had been considerably altered by a Midland transcriber before it fell into the hands of Robert Thornton. Thornton, as a Northumbrian, would probably have preferred the original reading, but finding the manuscript with its Southern modifications, he transcribed it as it stood, without attempt at restoration. In spite, however, of his having yielded to the changes of Southern transcribers, it is certain that we owe to Robert Thornton, of Oswaldkirk, a great debt of gratitude for having made a copy of the poem which has survived to our day. It is a grand specimen of Early English poetry, exhibiting some fine traits common to the early poetry of many nations, and certain special peculiarities of its own which are well worth careful study.

In almost all early poetry may be noted a simplicity of language united with what may be termed a recklessness of assertion and a contempt of the conditions required for constituting the probable. Effect is sought to be produced not by the subtle analysis of thought and feeling, nor by the description of scenery and natural objects, but by the crowding together of startling incidents, and the ascription of marvellous powers and prowess to the favoured hero. Early poetry is, as it were, the expression of inexperience, of thoughtlessness and light-heartedness, not bearing the marks of a complicated state of society, where the restless struggle for social superiority absorbs the energies and gives a grave cast to the reflections. Now this gay and light-hearted character seems to be eminently characteristic of the *Morte Arthure*. The ease with which “fifty thousand of folke are felled at ones” when they stand in the way of the victory of the knights; the jovial vein in which Arthur cleaves asunder the giant Colapas, bidding him come down and “karpe to his feris,” for that “he is too high by half” to do so comfortably in his giant form; the character of Sir Gawaine, “the gude man of arms,” who is so eminent a favourite with the poet because he was “the gladdest of othire,”

“And the hendeste in haule undire hevene riche,”
all testify to this.

And united with this light-hearted vein the least glimpse at the poem will reveal the noble contempt for the probable which it exhibits. Illustration of this is unnecessary, as the whole poem illustrates it. The author might indeed plead that he was not responsible for the “facts;” that he took them from good authority, even from the grave historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who has duly chronicled, in choice mediæval Latin,

the adventures of Arthur and his wars with "Sir Lucius." And, truly, few readers of the poem would desire him to have been possessed of a greater critical acumen, and to have set to work to discriminate, select, and weigh probabilities. Better is it to have the original romance in all its richness and raciness, than any amended or more respectable version of the deeds of the "rich king." Arthur is here a "kydd conqueror" throughout; even in his final conflict inflicting poetical justice on the villain Modred, and dying happily among his people, with the nation sorrowing at his tomb. But in this poem, not only is a grand romance given in highly-spirited diction; there are also passages which show a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, and others which breathe a truly touching pathos. Of the first character especially are the descriptions of the river banks and woodland copse through which Arthur and his knights ride when they go to combat the giant,¹ and of the spot chosen for the midday halt by the party headed by Sir Florent.²

¹ Thane they roode by that ryver, that rynnyd so swythe,
 Thare the ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
 The roo and the rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
 In ranez and in rosers to ryotte thame selvene.
 All the feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
 Fore thare galede the gowke one grevez fulle lowde.
 Of the nyghtgale notez the noisez was sweete,
 They threpide with the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
 That whate swowynge of watyr, and syngynge of byrdez,
 It myghte salve hym of sore, that sounde was nevere!

—(ll. 920-932.)

² And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
 In swathes swappene downe fullo of swete floures:
 Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes theire horses,
 To the grygynge of the daye, that byrdes gane synge;
 Whylles the surs of the sonne, that sonde es of Chryste,
 That solaces alle synfulle, that syghte has in erthe.

—(ll. 2506-2512.)

Of the latter, Arthur's beautiful lament over Sir Gawaine,¹ and his touching reflections on his dead knights.² The writer of this romance was assuredly not wanting in the feeling of true poetry, while his vigorous diction and his extraordinary power of heaping epithets upon epithets prove great skill and proficiency in the difficult style of versification which he had adopted. As specimens of this vigour and life we can, perhaps, adduce no better instances than the account of the banquet given to the Romans,³ and of the embarkation of Arthur's army.⁴

¹ Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede !
 For nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide !
 Here es the hope of my hele, my happyng of armes !
 My concelle, my comforthe, that kepide myne herte !
 Of alle knyghtes the kynge that undir Criste lifede.
 My wele and my wirchipe of alle this werlde riche
 Was wonnene thourghe Sir Gawaine, and thourghe his witte one !
 —(ll. 3957-3965.)

² Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,
 Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more !
 I may helpes one hethe house be myne one,
 Alles a wafulle wedowe that wanttes hir beryne !
 I may werye and wepe, and wryngye myne handys,
 For my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever !
 Of alle lordchips I take leve to mye ende !
 Here es the Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
 And nowe in this journee alle my joye endys !
 —(ll. 4283-4292.)

³ Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
 Grett swannes fulle swythe in sylveryne chargeours,
 Tartes of Turky, taste whane thame lykys ;
 Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste ;
 Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
 Fesauntes enflureschit in flammande silver,
 With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe.

—(ll. 182-199.)

⁴ Coggez and crayers, than crossez thaire mastez,
 Wyghtly one the wale thay wye up thaire ankers.
 Holly with-owtynne harme thay hale in bottes,
 Schipe-mene scharply schotene thaire portez,

One of the most prominent marks of the style of this poem is the “stereotyped” epithet: “the rich king,” “the kydd conqueror,” “faire stedes,” “galyard knights,” “cruel words,” Sir Cador “the kene,” Sir Bedwere “the rich,” Sir Gawaine “the good,” are constantly recurring. We recognize one of the marked peculiarities of the great father of epic, who wrote of the “swift-footed Achilles,” the “glancing-plumed Hector,” the “many-murmuring sea,” “horse-feeding Argos,” and the “long-haired Greeks.” The unartificial nature of early poetry allows the constant recurrence of the same ideas. The epithet is rather part of the subject than a predicate, and the main business of the poem being not so much description as narration, there seems a fitness in the hero being constantly kept before our eyes as the possessor of certain attributes, while the great deeds which justify his “style and title” are recorded.

Another noteworthy peculiarity in the poem is the use of the adjective with the demonstrative pronoun without the substantive, *e.g.* “tha steryne,” “this sorrowfull,” “that hathelle,” “this kene,” “that realle.” This, which is akin to the Latin use, marks a stage of the language which has long passed away. Of a like character is the idiom common in this poem of putting the objective case of the pronoun before the verb—“*ȝif me* the life happene,” “that *him* over land folowes.” Observable also is the constant recurrence of the indefinite expressions “when he likes,” “when they like,” etc. Not only the stereotyped epithet, but the stereotyped phrase also, occurs regularly in

Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene ther depez,
 Lukkez to the lade-sterne whene the lyghte faillez,
 For drede of the derke nyghte thay drecchede a lyttile,
 And alle the steryne of the streme strekyne at onez.

—ll. 738-755.)

certain connections, and sometimes gives a highly ludicrous turn to the narrative by its inappropriateness to the sense.

The strong ecclesiastical tone which pervades the poem will not fail to be noticed by any reader. Not only are the dying knights duly attended by a confessor, shriven and comforted with the last Sacraments, but there is observable in several passages a most zealous care against interfering with the goods of the "spirituality." When a grant is made of a city it is only "the temporall" which is granted, and the way in which Arthur is made to say

"I gyffe my protteccione to alle the pope landez,
It is a foly to offendre oure fadyr undire Gode,
Owther Peter or Paule tha postles of Rome.
ȝiff we spare the spirituelle, we spedre bot the bettire,"

sufficiently speaks for itself.

The Editor desires to express his thanks to Mr. R. Morris for his valuable help in preparing the Glossary.

On the rhythm of the alliterative metre a paper has been kindly communicated by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, M.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, who has made English metre his especial study. This is here subjoined.

It is only needful further to state that one sheet of the poem having been inadvertently sent to the press before the final collation with the manuscript was made, a list of *corrigenda* (most of them unimportant) has to be supplied.

WADDINGTON RECTORY,
September, 1865.

ON THE METRE OF THE POEM.

The metre in which the “*Morte Arthure*” is written may best be understood by comparing it with “*Piers Plowman*,” the accentuation and *swing* of the verse being much better marked in the last-mentioned poem. The principles which govern this peculiar metre may thus be more readily discerned, and, when once understood, may easily be applied to the present poem.

For a similar reason, it will be the simplest method to consider, first of all, a few lines (of “*Piers Plowman*”) where the metre is most strongly marked, and, afterwards, some where it is, apparently, less regular.

It should first, however, be observed that each complete line in an alliterative poem consists generally of two *sections*, which were separated in old manuscripts by a dot, called the *metrical point* or *pause*, and which may conveniently be denoted by a colon (as in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms), thus :—

“*Schelde us fro schamesdede: and sinfulle werkes;*”

or else by printing the lines thus :—

“*Schelde us fro schamesdede,
And sinfulle werkes.*”

In reading aloud a pause may conveniently be made between the sections.

The two sections form, however, but one complete line; and, as the metrical point is more necessary when the poem is to be sung or recited than when it is merely to be read, it has not been thought necessary to insert it in this edition, as the reader, when he has once caught the rhythm of the verse, may always be tolerably sure as to where it must occur.

To begin, then ; consider the line—

“ In séttynge and sówynge
Swónken ful hárde.”

—*Piers Plowman* ; ed. Wright, l. 41.

If we use an asterisk to denote a strongly-accented¹ syllable, the figure 1 to denote a *single* unaccented syllable, the figure 2 to mean *two* unaccented syllables immediately succeeding each other, and so on ; we may represent the above line by the scheme,

1 * 2 * 1 : * 2 * 1 ;

and this may be taken as a convenient type of alliterative lines, from which the scansion of very many others may be readily deduced. Some, however, as will be shewn presently, must be referred to a type somewhat different.

Now, we here observe (1) that each section contains two strong accents ; (2) that, of the strongly-accented syllables, three begin with a common letter, which has been called the *rime-letter* ; and (3) of these three, two occur in the first section, and one in the second. Such is the usual and normal arrangement. The *rime-letters* may be either consonants or vowels, and may consist of *single* letters, or of such combinations as *sc*, *bl*, *tr*, etc. If vowels, it is sufficient that they *are* so ; they need not be the *same* vowels, and, in practice, are generally *different*.

Again, the last strongly-accented syllable in the line does *not* begin with the rime-letter. This also is the usual and more correct arrangement.

Having once this typical form to refer to, it is easy to enumerate most of the changes which may arise. Let us now take the line,

“ Hire² mésse and hire mótnys,
And móny of hire hoáres.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 193.

We have here the arrangement

1 * 2 * 1 : 1 * 3 * 1

¹ I use the term *strongly-accented* advisedly, all accents not being equal. Thus, in the line—

“ On the oát-grass and the swórd-grass, and the búlrush in the pól,”
the syllables marked are *strongly-accented*.

² “Hire is a monosyllable.”—*Guest on English Rhythms* ; ed. 1838, p. 34.

which shews (1) that an unaccented syllable may be introduced at the beginning of the second section ; and (2) that the number of intermediate unaccented syllables may be readily increased to *three*.

Now herein lies the peculiar freedom and elasticity of alliterative verse ; we shall soon find by observation that, under certain circumstances, as many as *four* short unaccented syllables (even if they contain among them one that *is* accented *slightly*) may be inserted at pleasure between the emphatic syllables without destroying the rhythm ; for it is one addressed to the *ear* only, and not to the *eye*. The chief point which the poet has to take care of is that when he introduces a larger number of unaccented syllables, they should be capable of rapid enunciation, lest the verse seem clogged and unmusical. An example may be seen in the lines,

“ Fáiteden for her fóode,
Foúghten at the ále.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 83.

Which may be denoted by

* 4 * 1 : * 3 * 1

It would take up too much space to explain here the true method of scanning the lines by division into feet ; it may suffice to say that the *general effect* of the metre is *dactylic*, supposing the term *dactyl* to be capable of application to an *English* foot, which, to speak strictly, it is not. Indeed, the nomenclature of English prosody is in sore need of alteration. Neither is there space to explain, and to account for, the curious variations which may further be made in the alliterative metre. The view here given is only an approximate one, which will be found useful in practice. A longer pasage may exemplify it better—

“ I lóked me on my léft half
As the lády me taúghte,
And was wár of a wómmán
Wórthilich y-clóthed,
Púrfled with pélure,
The fýnest upon érthe,
Y-córouned with a córoun,
The kýng hath none bétter ;
Fétisliche hyr fingres
Were frétted with góld wyr.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 892.

<i>Analysis:</i>	1	*	4	*	1	:	2	*	2	*	1
	2	*	2	*	1	:		*	3	*	1
	*	3	*	1	:	1	*	3	*	1	
	1	*	4	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1
	*	3	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1	

One variation, however, found oftenest in the first section, is too important to be passed over. It is that we sometimes find in a section a *third* strongly-accented syllable, thus giving to the line a rather unwieldy length ; as in,

“The móoste míschief on mólde
Is móuntyne wel fáste.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 133.

This third accent is often very awkwardly placed, as in the first line of “*Morte Arthure*,”

“Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym selvene.”

Other noticeable deviations from the strict type may be briefly indicated.

(1) The syllable beginning with the rime-letter is sometimes unemphatic ; as in “*Morte Arthure*,” l. 59,

“In Glamórgan with glée: thare gládschip was évere.”

(2) Sometimes there are but *two* rime-letters, as in l. 80,

“So cóme in sódanly; a sénatour of Róme.”

(3) Sometimes there is *no* alliteration, as in l. 70. (4) Sometimes there are *four* rime-letters, as l. 32, where all belong to accented syllables,

“Scáthyllé Scóttlande by skýlle: he skýstys as hym lýkys;”

or as in l. 35, where one belongs to an unaccented syllable,

“Hólaund and Hénawde: they héilde of hym bóthe.”

It will now be sufficient, perhaps, to indicate what is probably the correct accentuation of the first fourteen lines, as this will enable the reader to perceive in them a certain vigorous *swing* (well suited for the ballad-reciter), which will suggest the scansion of most other lines, though there is always somewhat of difficulty in it, from the fact that we have now-a-days changed the accentuation of many words, and cannot be quite certain about the final *e*’s.

“Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym sélvene,
And the prémious prayere: of hys prýs móder

Schéldre us ffro schámesdede : and sýnfullle wérkes,
 And gýffe us gráce to gýe : and góverne us hére
 In thys wréchyd wérlد: thorowe vért[u]ous lýwynge
 That we may káyre till hys coúrte : the kýngdome of hévyne,
 Whene oure sáules schall pártre : and súndyre ffra the bódy
 Ewyre to bélde and to býde : in blýsse with hymé sélvene ;
 And wýsse me to wérpe owte : some wórde at this týme,
 That nothyre vóyde be ne výyne : bot wýrchip tille hymé sélvyne ;
 Plésande and prófitabille : to the péople þat theme héres.
 ȝe that liste has to lýth : or lúffes for to hére
 Off élders of álde tyme : and of their áwke dédys,
 Hów they were léle in their láwe : and lóvede Gód Almýghty," etc.

The accentuation of the last two lines is a little doubtful. There may have been an accent on the second *of* in l. 13, owing to its position and the fact of its beginning with a rime-letter ; while in l. 14 we have the rather unusual number of six accents, unless "how" was slurred over.

After all, the best way of perceiving the rhythm is to read over some fifty lines several times till they seem quite familiar, and then to read them over once more *out loud*, with strong emphasis on the verbs, substantives, and adjectives, and with a natural and free pronunciation.

C O R R I G E N D A.

The Roman *e* at the end of the following words should be read *e* Italic:—Falterde, line 1092; schovelle-fotede, 1098; schowande, 1099; yryne, 1105; alle, 1105, 1253, 1310, 1323; ffulle, 1112, 1125, 1346, 1520, 1576; evylle, 1116; wapyne, 1119; harde, 1135; balefulle, 1136; wrythynge, 1141; forfetede, 1155; howelle, 1180; irene, 1186; christene, 1187; wapene, 1193; whilles, 1197; thare-ine, 1254; wille, 1257; hym-selvene, 1304; mene, 1315; castelles, 1339; lytille, 1423; kynge, 1507; salle, 1511; takyne, 1519; wille, 1556; selfene, 1560; one, 1573; salle, 1575.

To the following words an Italic *e* should be appended:—Kyng, 1106, 1110, 1127, 1263; feyed, 1114; tung, 1250; howsyng, 1284.

In the following words the *n* should be read Italic:—Accountes, 1102; sergeaunt, 1173; presonne, 1632.

In the following the syllable *er* should be read Italic:—Over, 1142; soveraygne, 1167; gleterande, 1280; delyverde, 1548.

In the following the syllable *ur* should be read Italic:—ȝour, 1480; Petur, 1519.

<i>For</i> skyste,	92, 1643,	<i>read</i> skyfte.
„ aperty,	212,	„ a party.
„ arouuede,	340,	„ aroumede.
„ knelande,	1137,	„ kneland.
„ Lucius,	1267,	„ <i>Lucius</i> .
„ unfawghte,	1306,	„ unsawghte.
„ be,	1327,	„ bee.
„ salle,	1364,	„ sable.
„ breme,	1380,	„ brene.
„ entters,	1499,	„ enters.
„ heynne,	2436,	„ heȝune (?).
„ welle,	2706,	„ welles.
„ dyghte,	3066,	„ nyghte.
„ nyghte,	3267,	„ dyghte.
„ lene,	3350,	„ leve.
„ ȝee at ȝorke,	3912,	„ ȝede at ȝoske.

Morte Arthure.

Here begynnes Morte Arthure. In nomine
Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen
pro charite. Amen.

Now grett glorious Godd, thurgh grace of hym selvene,
And the precyous prayere of hys prys modyr,
Schelde us ffro schamesdede and synfuller werkes,
4 And gyffe us grace to gye, and governe us here,
In this wrechyd world, thorowe vertous lywynge,
That we may kayre til hys courte, the kyngdom^e of hevyne,
Whene oure saules schalle parte and sundyre ffra the body,
8 Ewyre to belde and to byde in blysse with hym^e selvene; ^{*rest in safety}
And wysse me to ^{writte} werpe owte some worde at this tyme,
That nothyre voyde be ne vayne, bot wyrchip till^e hym^e ^{*dread / walk and g^ee}
selvyn^e;
Plesande *and* profitabille to the pople þat theme heres.

12 ȝe that liste has to lyth, or luffes for to here,
Off elders of alde tyme and of theire awke dedys,
How they were lele in theire lawe, and lovede God Almyghty,
Herkynes me heynly and holdys ȝow stylle,
16 And I sall^e telle ȝow a tale, þat trewe es and nobylle,
Off the ryealle renkys of the rowunde table,
That chefe ware of chevalrye and cheftans nobylle,
Bath^e ware in thire werkes and wyse mene of armes,

The poet prays
for grace,

^{*travel}
^{*profitable.}

Ye that list to
hear of strange
deeds of old,

hearken to a tale
of the Round
Table.

These knights
were noble, wise,
and brave,

kind, and courteous, and worshipful.
They slew Lucius, lord of Rome, and conquered his king-
dom. Hear now the story.

20 Doughty in theire doyngs and dredde ay schame,
Kynde menē and courtays, and couthe of courte thewes.
How they whanne wyth were wyrchippis many,
Slouge Lucyus ^{leader} lythyre, that lorde was of Rome,
And conqueryd that kyngryke thorowe craftys of armes ;
Herkenes now hedyrwarde, and herys this storie.

When King Arthur had won back all the realm of Uther,

Argyle, Orkney, and the isles

Ireland and Scot-
land,
Wales, Flanders, and France,
had made tribu-
tary Holland and Hainault, Bur-
gundy and Brabant, Brittany, Guienne, Goth-
land and Greece.

He built Bayonne and Bordeaux, Tours and Toul;

was prince of Poictiers and Provence, of Valence and Vienne, of Erugia and Aniana, of Naverne and Norway and Normandy.

Of Germany, of Austria, and many other lands.
He conquered all Denmark with his sword.

Then he dubbed his knights and gave them lands.

Created kings anointed.

Then rested the hero, and held the Round Table.

24 ^{country kingdom} And he had coverede the corounē of the kyth ryche
Of alle that Uter in erthe aughte in his tyme,
Orgayle and Orkenay, and alle this owte iles,
Irelande uttirly, as occyane rynnys ; ^{airanges}
32 Scathylle Scottlande by skylle he skystys as hym lykys,
And Wales of were he wane at hys wille,
Bathe fflaundrez and ffraunce fre til hym selvyne ;
Holaund and Henawde they helde of hym bothe,
36 Burgoyne and Brabane, and Bretayne the lesse,
Gyane and Gothelande, ^{and} Grece the ryche ;
Bayone and Burdeux he beldytt fulle faire,
Turoyne and Tholus with toures fulle hye ;
40 Off Peyters and of Provynce he was prynce holdyne,
Of Valence and Vienne, off value so noble ;
Of Eruge and Anyone, thos erledoms ryche,
By conqueste fulle cruelle þey knewe hym fore lorde ;
44 Of Naverne and Norwayne, and Normaundye eke,
Of Almayne, of Estriche, and oþer ynowe ;
Danmarke he dryssede alle by drede of hym selvyne,
Fra Swynne unto Swether-wyke, with his swrede kene !
48 Qwenne he thes dedes had done, he doubbyd hys knygitez,
Dyvysyde dowcherys and delte in dyverse remmes ;
Mad of his cosyns kyngys ennoyntede,
In kyth there they covaitte crounes to bere.
52 Whene he thys rewmes hade redyne and rewlyde the pople,
Then rystede that ryalle and helde þe Rounde Tabylle ;
Suggeourns þat sesone to solace hym selfene,

In Gretayne *þe* braddere,¹ as hym beste lykes ;
 56 Sythyn *wente* into Wales with his wyes alle,
 Sweys into Swaldye with his snelle houndes,
 For to hunt at *þe* hartes in thas hye laundes,
 In Glamorgane with glee, thare gladchipe was evere ;
 60 And thare a citee he sette, be assentte of his lordys,
 That Cacrlyone was callid, with curious walles,
 On the riche revare *þat* rynnys so faire,
 There he myghte semble his sorte to see whenne hym lykyde,
 64 Thane aftyre at Carlelele a Cristynmese he haldes,
 This ilke kyde ^{famous} conquerour, and helde hym for lorde,
 Wyth Dukez and dusperes of dyvers rewmes,
 Erles and erchevesques, and oþer ynowe,
 68 Byschopes and bachelers, and banerettes nobille,
þat bowes to his banere, buske whene hym lykys :
 Bot on the Cristynmesdaye, whene they were alle semblyde,
 That comlyche conquerour commaundez hym selvyn^e
 72 *þat* ylke a lorde sulde lenge, and no lefe take,
 To the tende day fully ware takyne to *þe* ende.
 Thus one ryalle araye he helde his rounde table,
 With semblant and solace and selcouthe metes ;
 76 Whas never syche noblay, in no manys tyme,
 Mad in mydwynter in *þa* Weste marchys !
 Bot on the newȝere daye, at *þe* none evyne,
 B As the bolde at the borde was of brede servyde,
 80 So come in sodanly a senatour of Rome,
 Wyth sextene knyghtes in a soyte sewande hym one.
 He saluȝed the soverayne and the sale aftyr,
 Ilke a kyng^e aftyre kyng^e,² and mad his enclines ;
 84 Gaynour in hir degré he grette as hym lykyde,
 And syne agayne to *þe* gome he gaffe up his nedys :
 “ Sir Lucius Iberius, the Emperour of Rome,

After solacing himself in Britain, he goes into Wales,

to hunt the hart with his swift hounds,

and in Glamorgan founds Caerleon upon Usk.

At Caerleon he holds high festival at Christmastide with his lords and bishops,

and bids none depart from the feast till ten days are expired.

Never was so noble a feast known.

But on New Year's day, as the knights were feasting, there came in suddenly a Senator of Rome, attended by sixteen knights, who salutes King Arthur and his knights, and Guinevre the Queen.

Then, in the name of Sir Lu-

¹ “The More Bretayne Englond is
As men may rede on Cronyclys.”

—Arthur (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 503.

² A tag (†) is appended to these g's, which is taken to indicate a final e. Halliwell reads it without the e.

cius Iberius, the
Emperor of
Rome,

He summons Ar-
thur to appear at
Rome on Lammas
day,

to answer why
he occupies his
lands instead of
paying homage
to him,

and how he dares
to rebel against
him.

But if Arthur
will not come,
the Emperor will
invade his land
and take him
captive,

and destroy him
wherever he may
fly.

The Register of
Rome declares
that Arthur's fa-
ther paid tribute,
which was won
by Julius Cæsar
and his gentle
knights.

Then did king
Arthur look with
ferocious glance
on the Senator.

Saluȝ the as sugett, undyre his sele ryche ;

88 It es credens, *syr* kyng, with cruelle wordez,
Trow it for no trufles, his targe es to schewe ! document

Now in this newȝers daye with notaries sygne,
I make the somouns in sale to sue for þi landys,

92 That on Lammesse daye thare be no lette ffoundene,
þat thou bee redy at Rome with alle thi rounde table,
Appere in his presens with thy price knyghtez,
At pryme of the daye, in Payne of þour lyvys,

96 In þe kydd capytoile before þe kyng selvyne,
Whene he and his senatours bez sette as them lykes,
To ansuere anely why thow occupyest the laundez,
That awe homage of alde tille hym and his eldyrs ;

100 Why thow has redyne and raymede, and raunsound þe pople,
And kyllide dounȝ his cosyns, kyngys ennoynttude ;
Thare schalle thow gyffe rekkyngynge for alle thy round
table,

Why thow arte rebelle to Rome, and rentez them
wytholdez !

104 Iff thow theis sommons wythsytte, he sendes thie thies
wordes,
He sallȝ the seke over þe see wyth sextenȝ kynges,
Bryne Bretayne þe brade, and bryttyne thy knyghtys,
And bryngȝ the bouxsomly as a beste with brethe whare
hym lykes,

108 That thow ne schalle rowte ne ryste undyr the hevene
ryche,
þoþe thow for reddour of Rome ryne to þe erthe !
ffor if thow flee into Fraunce or ffreselaund owþer,
þou sallȝ be feched with force, and oversette for ever !

112 Thy fadyr mad fewtee, we fynde in oure rollez,
In the regestre of Rome, who so ryghte lukez :
With-owtayne more trouflying the trebute we aske,
That Julius Cesar wane wyth his jentille knyghttes !”

116 The kyngȝ blyschit one the beryne with his brode eghne,
þat fulle brymly for breth brynte as the gledys ;

Keste colours as kyng with crouelle lates,
Luked as a lyone, and on his lyppe bytes !

120 The Romaynes for radnesse ruschte to þe erthe,
fforde ferdnesse of hys face, as they fey were ;
Cowchide as kenetez before þe kynge selvyne,
be-cause of his contenaunce confusede theme semede !

So terrible was his face that the Romans couched and quailed before him.

124 Thene coverd up a knyghte, and criede ful lowde,¹

“ Kynge coronnde of kynd, curtays and noble,
Misdoo no messengere for menske of þi selvyne,
Sen we are in thy manrede, and mercy þe besekes ;

Then one of them humbly entreats mercy.

128 We lenge with *syr Lucius*, that lorde es of Rome,
That es þe mervelyousteste mane þat on molde lengez ;
It es lefull tille us his likyng tille wyrche ;²
We come at his commaundment ; have us excusede.”

132 Then carpys þe conquerour crewelle wordez,—

“ Haa ! cravaunde knyghte ! a cowarde þe semez !
þare some segge in this sale, and he ware sare grevede,
Thow durste noghte fulle alle Lumberdye luke one hym
ones.”

Upon which Arthur upbraids him as a coward.

136 “ Sir,” sais þe Senatour, “ so Crist mott me helpe,
þe voute of thi vesage has woundyde us alle !
Thow arte þe lordlyeste lede þat ever I one lukyde ;
By lukyng, with-owtynne lesse, a lyone the semys !”

But the Senator excuses him on the ground that Arthur's visage is very terrible.

140 “ Thow has me somond,” quod þe kyng, “ and said what
þe lykes ;³

Fore sake of thy Soveraynge I suffre the þe more ;
Sen I coround in kyth wyth crysume enoynchte,
Was never creature to me þat carpede so large !

144 Bot I sall tak concelle at kynges enoynchte,
Off dukes and duspers and doctours noble,
Offe peres of the perlement, prelates and oþer,
Off þe richeste renkys of þe rounde table ;

The King tells him that he will take counsel of his dukes, doctors, peers, and knights,

148 þus schalle I take avisemente of valiant beryns,

¹ *hyghe* in text, erased, and *lowde* written in margin.

² The text has *shewe* which has been erased, and *wyrche* written in the margin.

³ *Likyd* erased and *lykes* written in margin.

Wyrke aftyre the wytte of my wyes knyghttes :
 To warpe wordez in waste no wyrchipp it were,
 Ne wilfully in þis wrethe to wrekene my selvene.

while the Romans stay a week
 to refresh themselves. 152 For-þi salle þow lenge here, *and* lugge wyth þise lordes,
 This sevenyghte in solace, to suggourne þour horses,
 To see whatte lyfe þat wee leede in thees law laundes."

Sir Cayous is bid to entertain the lords, 156 He commande *syr* Cayous, take kepe to thoos lordes,
 To styghtyll *þa* steryne mene as theire statte askys,
 That they bee herberde in haste in thoos heghe chambres ;
 Sythine sittandly in *sale* servyde ther-aftyr ;

and their horses. 160 That they fynd na fawte of fude to thiere horsez,
 Nowthire weyne ne waxe, ne welthe in þis erthe ;

He was not to spare, but to feast them liberally. 164 Spare for no spycerrye, bot spende what þe lykys,
 That there be largeste one lofte, and no lake foundene ;

164 If þou my wyrchip wayte wy be my trouthe,
 þou salle have gersoms fulle grett, þat gayne salle þe evere!"

Now er they herberde in hey, *and* in oste holdene,
 Hastyly wyth hende mene with-in thees heghe wallez ;

Their chambers were furnished with chimneys. 168 In chambrys with chympnes þey chaungene þeire wedez ;
 And sythine the chauncelere þeme fatchede with chevalrye
 noble ;

The Senator sat at the King's table, and was served like himself, 172 Sone þe senatour was sett, as hym wele semyde,
 At þe kyngez ownne borde ; twa knyghtes hym servede,

for the Romans are of the most royal blood on earth. 176 Singulere sothely, as Arthure hym selvyne,
 Richely on þe ryghte haunde at the rounde table ;
 Be resounе þat þe Romaynes whare so ryche holdene,
 As of þe realeste blode þat reynede in erthe.

Boar's-heads there were served upon silver by numerous gaily dressed attendants. 180 There come in at þe fyrste course, befor þe kynge selvene,
 Barehevedys þat ware bryghte, burnyste with sylver,
 Alle with taghte mene and towne in togers fulle ryche,
 Of saunke realle in suyte, sixty at ones ;
 Venison, fatted and wild, with choice bread, 180 fflesch fluriste of fermysone with frumentee noble
 Ther-to wylde to wale, and wynlyche bryddes,¹

¹ *bredes* erased and *bryddes* written in margin.

Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
Pygges of porke despyne, þat pastured never;

184 Sythene herons in hedoyne, hyled fulle faire;
Grett swannes fulle swythe in silveryne chargeours,
Tartes of Turky, taste whane þeme lykys;
Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste;

188 Seyne bowes of wylde bores with þe braune lechyde,
Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
þareby braunchers in brede bettyr was never,
With brestez of barowes, þat bryghte ware to schewe,

192 Seyne come þer sewes sere, with solace þer-after,
Ownd of azure alle over and ardant þem semyde,
Of ilke aleche þe lowe launschide fulle hye,
þat alle ledes myghte lyke þat lukyde þeme apone;

196 þane cranes and curlues craftyly rosted,
Connygez in cretoyne colourede fulle faire,
ffesauntez enflureschit in flammande silver,
With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe;

200 þane clarett and Creette, clergyally rennene,
With condethes fulle curious alle of clene silvyre;
Osay and algarde, and oþer ynewe,
Rynisch wyne and Rochelle, richere was never;

204 Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete;
In faucetez of fyne golde, fonode whoso lykes;
The kyngez cope-borde was closed in silver,
In grete goblettez overgylte glorious of hewe;

208 There was a cheeffe buttlere, a chevalere noble,
Sir Cayous þe curtaise, þat of þe cowpe servede;
Sexty cowpes of suyte offore the kyng selvyne,
Crafty and curious corvene fulle faire,

212 In ever-ilk aperty pyghe with preuous stones,
That nane enpoysone sulde goo prevly þer undyre,
Bot þe bryght golde for brethe sulde briste alto peces,
Or ells þe venyme sulde voyde thurghe vertue of þe stones,

216 And the conquerour hymselfene, so clenyly arayede
In colours of clene golde, cleede wyth his knyghtys,

peacocks and plovers upon golden plates,
sucking pigs,
herons in sauce,
huge swans,
tarts and conserves,

hams and brawn in slices,
wild geese and ducks,
young hawks,

various stews and made dishes ornamented brightly,

Cranes and curlews roasted,
rabbits served in sweet sauce,
pheasants upon silver,
curries made to shine bright, and numerous other dainties.
Wine caused to run skilfully in silver conduits.

Rare sorts served in cups of fine gold.
The King's cupboard was glorious with plate.

The chief butler was Sir Cayous,

who served the wine in goblets decked with precious stones, which binder the deadly effects of poison.

Arthur was clad in cloth of gold

with his crown
on; the doughti-
est knight that
dwelt on earth.

Then he spake 220
courteous words
to those lords.

"Sirs, be of good
cheer, we give
you the best our
barren country
affords, which in-
deed is but
poor."

"Sir," says the
Senator, "Rome
itself can show
nothing equal to
this luxurious
feast."

Then they wash-
ed and withdrew
to the chamber.

Sir Gawaine leads
Guinevere.

Spiced drinks
were served to
all.

Certain lords
were assigned to
attend upon the
Senator.

Arthur goes to
council in the
Giant's tower,

with his lords,
justices, judges,
and gentle
knights.

First speaks Sir
Cador of Corn-
wall.

The letters of Sir
Lucius, he says,
delight his heart.

Drissid with his dyademe one his deesse ryche,
ffore he was demyde þe doughtyeste þat duellyde in erthe.

Thane þe conquerour kyndly carpede to þose lordes,
Rehetede þe Romaynes with realle speche,

"Sirs, bez knyghtly of contenaunce, and comfurthes
ȝourselvynes,

We knowe noghte in þis countre of curios metez;

224 In thees barayne landez, bredes none oþer,
ffore-thy wythowtynge feynyng, enforce ȝow þe more
To feede ȝow with syche feble as þe be-fore fynde."

"Sir," sais þe Senatour, "so Criste motte me helpe!

There rygnede never syche realtee with-in Rome walles!
There ne es prelatte ne pape, ne prynce in þis erthe,
That ne he myghte be wele payede of þees prycy metes!"

A ftyre theyre welthe þey wesche, and went un-to
chambyre,

232 Þis ilke kyddre conquerour with knyghtes ynewe;
Sir Gaywayne þe worthye Dame Waynour he hledys;
Sir Owghtreth on þe toþer syde of Turry was lorde.

Thane spyces unsparyly þay spendyde there-aftyre,

236 Malvesye and muskadelle, þase mervelyous drynkes,
Raykede fulle raythely in rossete cowpes,
Tille alle þe riche on rawe, Romaynes and oþer.

Bot the soveraigne sothely, for solaunce of hym selvene,

Assignyde to þe senatour certaygne lordes,
To lede to his leve, whene he leve askes,
With myrthe and with melodye of mynstralsy noble.

Thane þe conquerour to concelle cayres there aftyre,

244 Wyth lordes of his lygeaunce þat to hymselfe langys;
To þe geauntes toure jolily he wendes,
Wyth justicez and juggez, and gentille knyghtes.

Sir Cador of Cornewayle to þe kyng carpess,

248 Lughe one hym luffly with lykande lates;
"I thanke Gode of þat thraa þat us þus thretys!
ȝow moste be traylede, I trowe, bot ȝife þe trett bettyre:
þe lettres of eyr Lucius lyghettys mynþe herte!"

252 We hafe as losels liffyde many longe daye,
 Wyth delyttes in this land with lordchipez many,
 And forelytenede the loos þat we are layttede :
 I was abaischite, be oure Lorde, of oure beste bernes,
 They had too long
 lived a life of
 inglorious peace.

256 Fore gret duele of deffuse of dedez of armes !
 Now wakkenyse þe were ! wyrchipide be Cryste !
 And wesalle wynne it agayne be wyghtnesse and strenghe !”
 “ Sir Cador,” quod þe kynge, “ thy concelle es noble,
 260 Bot þou arte a mervailous mane with thi mery wordez !
 ffor thou countez no caas, ne castes no forthire,
 Bot hurles furthe appone hevede, as thi herte thynkes ;
 I moste trette of a trew towchande þise nedes,
 spoken from his
 heart without
 thought or care.

264 Talke of thies tythdands þat tenes myne herte ;
 þou sees þat þe Emperour es angerde a lyttile ;
 þat semes be his sandismene þat he es sore grevede ;
 His senatour has sommonde me, and said what hym lykyde,
 He himself is
 grieved at these
 tidings.

268 Hethely in my halle, wyth heynȝous wordes,
 In speche dissphysede me, and sparede me lyttile ;
 I myght noghte speke for spytte, so my herte trymblyde !
 He askyde me tyrauntly tribute of Rome,
 272 That tenefully tynt was in tyme of myne elders ;
 There alyenes, in absence of alle mene of armes,
 Coverd it of commons, as cronicles telles ;
 I have tide to take tribute of Rome,
 he has been in-
 sulted in his own
 hall by heinous
 words,

and insolently
 summoned to
 pay tribute to
 the Emperor of
 Rome,

276 Myne ancestres ware emperours, and aughteit þeme selvene,
 Belyne and Bremyne, and Bawdewyne the thyrde,
 They occupyede þe empyre aughte score wynntyrs,
 Ilkane ayere aftyre oþer, as awlde mene telles ;
 of whom he ought
 rather to demand
 tribute.

280 Thei coverde þe capitoile, and keste doun þe walles ;
 Hyngede of þeire heddys-mene by hundrethes at ones ;
 Seyne Constantyne, our kynsmane, conquerid it aftyre,
 þat ayere was of Ynglande, and Emperour of Rome,¹
 His ancestors oc-
 cupied the Em-
 pire of Rome
 eight score win-
 ters.

His kinsman,
 Constantine,
 afterwards sub-
 dued it—

¹ “ For the Emperor Constantine
 That was the son of Elyne
 That was a Bretone of this lond,
 Conquered Rome with his hond.”

— Arthur (ed. F. J. Furnivall), I. 249.

he who gained 284 He þat conquerid þe Crosse be craftez of armes,
by conquest the
true Cross.

Then answered 288 **T**han¹ answarde kyng Aungers to Arthure hym selvyne,
King Aungers
and said that Ar-
thur ought to be
supreme over all
kings.

The Romans had
done many evil
deeds in Scot-
land,
for which he
would have re-
venge.

He promises to
bring 50,000 men
to aid Arthur.

The Baron of 304 **T**han the burelyche beryne of Bretayne þe lyttyle
little Britain
would have Ar-
thur return a
fierce answer.

He fears the Ro-
mans no whit.

He promises to
bring 30,000

284 He þat conquerid þe Crosse be craftez of armes,
That Criste was on crucified, þat kyng es of hevene ;
Thus hafe we evydens to aske þe Emperour þe same,
That þus regnez at Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes.”

288 **T**“Thow aughte to be overlynge over alle oþer kynges,
ffore wyseste, and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundes,
The knyghtlyeste of counsaile þat ever corone bare ;

292 I dare saye fore Scottlande, þat we theme schathe lympyde,
Whene the Romaynes regnede, þay raunsounde oure eldyrs,
And rade in theire ryotte, and ravyschett oure wifes,
With-owtayne resone or ryghte refte us oure gudes ;

296 And I sallē make myne avowe devoutly to Criste,
And to þe haly vernacle vertuus and noble,
Of this grett velany I sallē be vengede ones
On þone venemus mene, wyth valiant knyghtes !

300 I sallē the forthire of defence fosterde ynewe
ffifty thowsande mene, wyth-in two eldes,
Of my wage for to wende, whare so the lykes,
To fyghte wyth thy ffaa mene, þat us unfaire ledes.”

304 **T**han the burelyche beryne of Bretayne þe lyttyle
Counsayles syr Arthure, and of hymē besekys
To ansuere þe alyenes wyth austerene wordes,
To entyce the Emperour to take overe the mounttes.

308 He said, “ I make myne avowe verreilly to Cryste,
And to þe haly vernacle, þat voide schalle I nevere,
ffor radnesse of na Romayne þat regnes in erthe ;
Bot ay be redye in araye, and at areste ffoudene,

312 No more dowte the dynte of theire derfe wapyns,
þan þe dewe þat es dannke, whene þat it dounē ffalles ;
Ne no more schoone fore þe swape of theire scharpe
suerddes,

Then fore þe faireste flour þatt on the folde growes !

316 I sallē to batelle the bryngē, of brenyede knyghtes
Thyrty thosaunde be tale, thryfytē in armes,

¹ *Yan* in MS.

Wyth-in a monethe daye in-to whatte marche,
þat þow wylle sothelye assygne, whene thyselfe lykes."

knights within a month.

320 "A! A!" sais þe Walsche kynge, "wirchipid be Criste!
Now schalle we wreke fulle wele þe wrethe of oure elders!
In West Walys i-wysse syche woundyrs-þay wroghte,
þat alle for wandrethe may wepe, þat one þat were thynkes.

Then Arthur ex-claims Ah! Ah! Now shall we have revenge.

324 I sallē have the avanttwardre wytterly my selvene,
Tyllé þat I have venquiste þe Vicounte of Rome,
þat wroghte me at Viterbe a velanye ones,
As I paste in pylgremage by the Pounte Tremble;
328 He was in Tuskayne þat tyme and tuke of oure knyghttes,
Areste them oonrygħt twyslye, and raunsound þameaftyre;
I sallē hym surelye ensure, þat saghetylle sallē we never,
Are we sadlye assemble by oure selfene ones,
332 And dele dynttys of dethē with oure derfe wapyns!

He himself would fight at the head of his army till he had revenged himself on the Viscount of Rome for a villainy he once wrought him at Viterbo.

And I sallē wagge to þat were of wyrchipulle knyghtes, He would take
Of Wyghte and of Walschelande, and of þe Weste marches, two thousand
Twa thosande in tale, horsede one stedy,
336 of þe wyghteste wyes in alle ȝone Weste landys!"

He would take two thousand picked knights.

Syre Ewane fytz Uryenee þane egerly frayne,
Was cosyne to þe conquerour, corageous hym selfene,
"Sir, and we wyste ȝour wylle, we walde wirke þer-aftyre;
340 ȝif þis journee sulde halde, or be arouede¹ forthyre,
To ryde one ȝone Romaynes and ryott theire landez,
We walde schape us there-fore to schippe whene ȝow
lykys."

Then spoke Sir Ewayne and said that they would all follow his command gladly.

"Cosyne," quod þe conquerour, "kyndly þou asches;
344 ȝife my concelle accorde to conquere ȝone landez,
By the kalendez of Juny we schalle encountre ones,
Wyth fulle creuelle knyghtez, so Cryste mot me helpe!
There-to make I myne avowe devotly to Cryste,
348 And to the holy vernacle vertuous and noble,
I sallē at Lammesse take leve, to lenge at my large
In Lorayne or Lumberdye, whethire me leve thynkys;

Then said Arthur,

"We will be ready by the kalends of June,

and at Lammas will enjoy ourselves in Lorraine or Lombardy.

¹ The reading of this word is somewhat doubtful. Halliwell reads *aprovede*, but there is certainly no trace of a *p* in the MS.

Merke un-to Meloyne, and myne doun^e þe wallez,

352 Bathe of Petyrsande, *and* of Pys, and of þe Pounte Tréble,

In þe Vale of Viterbe vetaile my knyghttes,

Suggourne there sex wokes *and* solace my-selfene;

Send prekers to þe price toune, and plaunte there my segge,

356 Bot if þay profre me þe pece be processe of tyme."

"Certys," sais *syr* Ewayne, "and I avowe aftyre,

And I þat hathelle may see ever with myne eghne,

That occupies thine heritage, the empyere of Rome,

360 I sall auntyre me anes hys egle to touche,

þat borne es in his banere of brighte golde ryche,

And raas it frome his riche mene, and ryste it in sondyre,

Bot he be redily reschowede with riotous knyghez;

364 I sall enforss^e ȝowe in þe felde *with* fresche mene of armes,

ffyfty thosande folke apone faire stedys,

On thi ffoo mene to foonde there the faire thynkes,

In ffrance *or* in ffriselande, feghte whene þe lykes!"

Then Lancelot declares his satisfaction at the war. 368 "By oure Lorde," *quod* *syr* Launcelott, now lyghttys myne herte!

I love Gode of þis love þis lordes has avowede!

Nowe may lesse mene have leve to say what them^e lykes,

And hase no lettyng be lawe, bot lystynnys þise wordez;

372 I sall be at journee *with* gentille knyghtes,

On a ramby stede fulle jolyly graythide,

Or any journee begane to juste *with* hym selfene,

Emange alle his geaunteez genyvers and oper,

376 Stryke hym styfflye fro his stede, *with* strenghe of myne handys,

ffor alle þa steryne in stour, þat in his stale hovys!

Be my retenu arayede, I rekke bot a lyttile

To make rowtte into Rome, *with* ryotous knyghtes!

380 With-in a sevnyghe daye, *with* sex score helmes,
I sall be seen^e on the see, saile when þe lykes."

Than^e laughs *syr* Lottez, and alle one lowde meles,

"Me likez þat *syr* Lucius launges aftyre sorowe;

384 Now he wylnez þe were, hys wandrethe begynnys,

Sojourn six weeks in the Vale of Viterbo,

and advance skirmishers to Rome unless they offer peace in fitting time."

Then Sir Ewayne vows vengeance against the Emperor of Rome for occupying Arthur's heritage,

and promises 50,000 men on fair steeds.

He is ready to joust with the Emperor himself,

and to carry the war into Rome.

Sir Lottez laughs for joy,

It es owre weredes to wreke the wrethe of oure elders !

I make myne avowe to Gode, and to þe holy vernacle,

And I may se þe Romaynes, þat are so ryche haldene,

388 Arayede in þeire riotes on a rounde felde,

and hopes to see
the rich Romans
in their pomp,

I sallē at þe reverence of þe rounde table.

Ryde thrughte alle þe rowtte, rerewarde *and c̄her*,

Redy wayes to make, and renkkes fulle rowme,

392 Rynnande on rede blode, as my stede ruschez !

that he may cut
his way through
them and shed
their blood.

He þat folowes my fare, and fyrste commes aftyre,

Salle fynde in my fare waye many ffay levyde !”

Thane þe conquerour kyndly comforthes þese knyghtes,

396 Alowes þame gretly theire lordly a-vowes,—

Then Arthur
praises his
knights for up-
holding his
honour.

“ Alweldande Gode, wyrchip ȝow alle !

And latte me nevere wanntte ȝow, whylls I in werlde regne ;

My menske and my manhede ȝe mayntene in erthe,

400 Myne honour alle owt utterly in oþer kyngys landes ;

My wele and my wyrchipe, of alle þis werlde ryche,

ȝe have knyghtly conqueryde, þat to my coroune langes ;

Hym thare be ferde for no faees, þat swylke a folke ledes,

404 Bot ever ffresche for to fyghte, in felde whene hym lykes.

I acounte no kynge þat undyr Criste lyffes,

While they re-
main true to him
he fears no king
on earth.

Whilles I see ȝowe alle sounde, I sette be no more.”

Then the Council
broke up.

Q whene they tristily had tretyd, thay trumppede up
aftyre,

408 Descendyd doune with a daunce of dukes and erles ;

Music and
dancing suc-
ceeded,

Thane þey semblede to sale, and sowpped als swythe,

and they all were
feasted in the
hall.

All ȝis semly sorte, wyth semblante fulle noble.

Thene the roy realle rehetes thes knyghtys,

412 Wyth reverence and ryotte of alle his rounde table,

After seven days
the Senator de-
mands his answer
for the Emperor.

Tille seven dayes was gone : þe senatour askes

Answe to þe Emperour with austeryne wordez,

Aftyre þe Epiphanye, whene þe purpos was takyne

416 Of peris of þe parlement, prelates and oþer.

The kyng in his concelle, curtaise and nobleee,

Utters þe alienes, and ansuers hym selfe :—

“ Gret wele *Lucius*, thi lorde, and layne noghte þise wordes ;

Then Arthur bids
him greet *Lucius*

and tell him that he shall quickly see him in his country; 420 Ife þow be lygmane lele, late hymē wiet sone
I sallē at Lammese take leve, and loge at my large
In delitte in his laundez, wyth lordes ynnewe
Regne in my realtee, and ryste whene me lykes,

that he will hold his round table by the river Rhone, 424 By þe reyvere of Reone halde my rounde table,
ffaunge the fermes in satthe of alle þa faire rewmes,
ffor alle þe manace of hys myghte, *and* mawgree his eghne !
And merke sythene over the mounttez in-to his mayne londes,

and mine down the walls of Milan, 428 To Meloyne the mervaylous, and myne dounē the walles ;
In Lorrayne ne in Lumberdye lefe schalle I nowthire
Nokynē lede appone liffe, þat þare his lawes ȝemes ;
And turne in-to Tuschayne, whene me tyme thynkys,

ravage Tuscany with his fierce knights, 432 Ryde alle þas rowme landes wyth ryotous knyghttes ;
Byde hy[m] make reschewes for menske of hymē selvene,
And mette me fore his manhede in þase mayne landes !
I sallē be foundyne in Fraunce, fraiste whene hym lykes,

and before seven winters are gone besiege Rome, 436 The fyrste daye of feverȝere, in thas faire marches !
Are I be fechyde wyth force, or forfette my landes,
þe floure of his faire folke fulle fay sallē be levyde !
I sallē hym sekyrly ensure, undyre my seele ryche,

and many a senator shall rue his wrath. 440 To seige þe cetee of Rome wyth-in sevene wyntyre,
And that so sekerly ensege apone sere halves,
That many a senatour sallē syghe for sake of me one !
My sommons er certified, and þow arte fulle servyde

The messenger may depart as soon as he pleases. 444 Of cundit and credense, kayre whene the lykes :
I sallē thi journaye engyste, enjoynē themē my selvene,
ffro this place to þe porte, there þou sallē passe over ;
Sevene dayes to Sandewyche, sette at the large,

He must travel to Sandwich in seven days, 448 Sexty myle on a daye, þe somme es bott lyttile !
Thowe moste spedē at the spurs, and spare noghte thi fole,
Thowe weyndez by Watlyng-strette, and by no waye ells :
Thare thow nyghtes one nyghte, nedez moste þou lenge,

going by Wat-
ling-street, 452 Be it foreste or felde, found þou no forthire ;
Bynde thy blonke by a buske with thy brydille evene,
Lugge þi-selfe undyre lynde, as þe leefe thynkes,

stopping at night wherever he may chance to be, tying his horse to a bush by the bridle. 456

There awes none alyenes to ayere appone nyghtys,
 456 With syche a rebawdous rowtte to ryot thy selvene.
 Thy lycence es lemete in presence of lordys,
 Be now lathe or lette, ryghte as þe thynkes,
 For bothe þi lyffe and thi lyme lygges þer-appone,
 460 þoþe *syr* *Lucius* had laide þe lordchipe of Rome ;
 ffor be þow foundene a fute with-owte þe flode merkes,
 Aftyr þe aughtende day, whene undroune es rungene,
 þou sall e be hevedede in hye, *and with* horsse drawene,
 464 And seyne heyl be hangede, houndes to gnawene !
 The rente ne rede golde, þat un-to Rome langes,
 Salle y noghte redily renke, raunsone thyne one !”
 “ Sir,” sais the senatour, “ so Crist mot me helpe !
 468 Might I with wirchip wyne awaye ones,
 I sulde never fore emperor, þat on erthe lenges,
 Ofte unto Arthure ayere one syche nedys ;
 Bot I am sengilly here, with sex sum of knyghtes ;
 472 I be-seke ȝow, *syr*, that we may sounde passe :
 If any unlawefulle lede lette us by þe waye,
 With-in thy lycence, lorde, thy loosse es enpeyred.”
 “ Care noghte,” *quod* the kyng, “ thy coundyte es knawene
 476 f fro Carlelele to þe coste, there thy cogge lengges ;
 þoghe thy cofers ware fulle, cramede with sylver,
 Thow myghte be sekyre of my sele sixty myle forthire.”
 They inclined to þe kynge, and conuge þay askede,
 480 Cayers owtt of Carelele, catchez one theire horsez ;
 Sir Cadore þe curtayes kende theme the wayes,
 To Catrike þeme cunvayede, *and to* Crist þeme be-kennyde.
 So þey spede at þe spoures, þey sprangene þeire horses,
 484 Hyres þeme hakenayes hastyly þere aftyre ;
 So fore reddour þey redene, and risted theme never,
 Bot þif they luggedde undire lynd, whills þeme lyghte failede ;
 Bot evere þe senatour for-sothe soghte at þe gaynest,
 488 By þe sevende day was gone þe cetee þai rechide ;
 Of alle þe glee undire Gode so glade ware þey nevere,
 As of þe sounde of þe see and Sandwyche belles !

If after the even-
ing of the eighth
day he is found
in the country,
he shall be hang-
ed up for dogs to
eat.

Then the Senator
declares that if
he can only get
well away once,
he would never
again go on such
an errand.

He prays that his
retinue may be
protected on their
way.

Then Arthur tells
him that if his
coffers were
crammed full of
silver he would
be safe with his
passport.

Then did the Ro-
mans depart with
all speed,

and never rested
till they had
reached Sand-
wich by the time
prescribed.

Never were they
as glad of any
thing as of the
sound of the sea
and Sandwich
bells.

Wythowtynē more stowuntyngē they schippide þeire
horsez,

492 Wery to þe wane see þey went alle att ones ;
With þe mene of þe walle they weyde up þeire ankyrs,
And flede at þe fore flude, in Flaundrez þey rowede,
And thorugh Flaundres þey founde, as þeme faire thoghte,¹

496 Tille Akyne in Almayne, in Arthur landes ;
Gosse by þe Mount Goddarde fulle grevous wayes,
And so in-to Lumberddye lykande to schewe ;
They turne thurgh Tuskayne, with towres fulle heghe,

500 In pris apparelles theme in precious wedez ;
The sevondaye in suters þay suggourne þeire horsez,
And sekes þe Seyntez of Rome, be assente of knyghtes ;
Shythne prekes to þe pales with portes so ryche,
504 þare syr Lucius lenges with lordes enowe ;
Lowttes to hym lufly, and lettres hym bedes
Of credence enclosyde, with knyghtlyche wordez.
Then the emperor was egree, and enkerly fraynes

508 þe answere of Arthure ; he askes hym sone
How he arayes þe rewme, and rewlys þe pople ;
ȝif he be rebelle to Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes :
“ Thow sulde his ceptre have sesede, and sytynē aboune,
512 ffor reverence and realtee of Rome þe noble :
By sertes þow was my sandes, and senatour of Rome,
He sulde fore solemnitez hafe servede þe hym selvene.”

“ **T**hat wille he never for no waye of alle þis werle ryche,
Bot who may wynne hym of werre, by wyghtnesse
of handes ;²

Many fey schalle be fyrste appone þe felde levyde,
Are he appere in this place, profre whene þe likes :
I saye the syr Arthure es thyne enmye fore ever,

He claims no less than the Empire 520 And ettelles to bee overlyngē of þe empyre of Rome,
of Rome. That alle his ancestres aughte, bot Utere hym-selfe.

¹ *likyd* written first in MS. but erased and *thoghte* written in margin by same hand.

² In the short romance of Arthur, the Senator is still more plain-spoken,
“ His worthiness, Sir Emperor,
Passes much all youre.”—l. 286.

They crossed the
sea to Flanders,

and over Mount
St. Gothard into
Lombardy,

through Tuscany
to Rome.

Then the Senator
seeks an audience
with the Emperor
Lucius.

Who asks eagerly
for Arthur's an-
swer, and on what
ground he resists
the power of
Rome.

His ambassador
ought to have
seized his sceptre
and sat above
him.

Arthur, he says,
ought himself to
have served the
Senator.

Then answers the
Senator, that Ar-
thur is too great
to do that for
anyone.

516 Many fey schalle be fyrste appone þe felde levyde,
Are he appere in this place, profre whene þe likes :
I saye the syr Arthure es thyne enmye fore ever,

Thy nedes this newe *ȝere*, I notifiede my-selfene,
Be-fore þat noble of name and neyvesome of kynges ;

524 In the moste reale place of þe rounde table,
I somounde hym solempnylye, one seeande his knyghez ;

Sene I was formyde in faythe so ferde was I nevere,
In alle þe placez ther I passede of pryncez in erthe !

528 I wolde fore-sake alle my suyte of segnoury of Rome,
Or I eft to þat soveraygne whare sente one suyche nedes !

He may be chosyne cheftayne, cheefe of alle oþer,
Bathe be chauncez of armes and chevallrye noble,

532 for whyeseste and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundez :
Of alle the wyes þate I watte in this werlde ryche,
The knyghtlyeste creatoure in Cristyndome haldene,
Of kyng or of conquerour, crownede in erthe,

536 Of countenaunce of corage, of crewelle lates,
The comlyeste of knyghehode þat undyre Cryste lyffes !

He maye be spokene in dyspens, despysere of sylvere,
That no more of golde gyffes þane of grette stones,

540 No more of wyne þane of watyre, that of þe welle rynnys, and wine no more
Ne of welthe of þ[i]s werlde bot wyrchipe allone.

Syche contenaunce was never knowene in no kythe ryche,
As was with þat conquerour in his courte haldene ;

544 I countede at this Crystynmesse, of kyngez enoynttede, Ten kings anoint-
Hole tene at his table, þat tyme with hym selfene ;
He wylle werraye i-wysse, be-ware ȝif þe lykes,

Wage many wyghTEMene, and wache thy marches,

548 That they be redye in araye, and at areste foundyne ; Goð need is
ffor ȝife he reche un-to Rome, he raunsouns it for ever !
I rede þow dreste the þer-fore, and drawe no lytte langere,

To sekyre of þi sowdeours, and send to þe mowntes ; and that soldiers
552 Be þe quarte of this ȝere, and hym quarte staunde,
He wylle wyghtlye in a qwhyle one his wayes hye.” should be dis-
“Bee Estyre,” sais þe Emperour, “I ettylle my selfene, “By Easter,” says
To hostaye in Almayne with armede knyghez ; the Emperour, “I
556 Sende freklye into Fraunce, þat flour es of rewmes,
ffande to fette þat freke, and forfette his landez ; undertake to be in Germany with
an army,

and will send
many giants and
mighty men to
meet him in the
mountains.

A post shall be
occupied on
Mount St. Goth-
ard, with a beacon
ready to light,

and another on
Mount St. Ber-
nard.

He shall not be
suffered to enter
Pavia."

Then Lucius
sends letters into
the East,

to demand aid of
all the kings and
lords.
Quickly they all
came, for fear of
his might.

All that failed
were to forfeit
their lands.

ffor I sall^e sette kepers, fulle covaunde *and* noble,
Many geaunte of geene, justers fulle gude,

560 To mete hym in the mountes, *and* martyre hys knyghtes,
Stryke þeme doun^e in strates, and struye theme fore evere,
There sall^e appone Godarde a garette be rerede,
That schall^e be garneschte *and* kepyde with gude mene of
armes,

564 And a bekyne abovene to brynde whene þeme lykys,
þat nane enmye with hoste sall^e entre the mountes ;
There schall^e one mounte Bernarde be beyldede anōþere,
Buschede with banerettes and bachelers noble :

568 In at the portes of Pavye schall^e no prynce passe,
Thurgh the perelous places, for my pris knyghtes."

Thane *syr* Lucius lordlyche lettres he sendys
Onone in-to þe Oryente, with austerityne knyghtez,

572 Tille Ambyganye and Orcage, and Alysaundyre eke,
To Inde and to Ermonye, as Ewfrates rynnys,
To Asye, and to Affrike, and Ewrope þe large,
To Irritayne and Elamet, and alle þase owte ilez ;

576 To Arraby and Egipt, tille erles and oþer,
That any erthe occupes in þase Este marches,
Of Damaske and Damyat, and dukes and erles,
ffor drede of his daungere they dresside þem^e sone ;

580 Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kyngys
Come at his commandmente, clenly at ones ;
To Tartary *and* Turky, whene tythynngez es comene,
They turne in by Thebay terauntez fulle hugge,

584 The flour of þe faire folke, of Amazonnes landes ;
Alle thate ffaillez on þe felde be forfeitte fore evere !
Of Babyloyn^e and Baldake the burlyche knyghtes,
Bayous with þeire baronage bydez no langere ;

588 Of Perce and of Pamphile, and Preter Johnne landes,
Iche prynce with his powere appertlyche graythede ;
The Sowdane of Surrye assemblez his knyghtes,
ffra Nylus to Nazarethe, nommers fulle huge ;

592 To Garyere *and* to Galelé þey gedyre alle at ones ;

The Sowdanes that ware sekyre sowdeours to Rome,
They gadyrede overe þe Grekkes see with grevous wapyns,
In theire grete galays, wyth gleterande scheldez ;

596 The kynge of Cyprys one þe see þe Sowdane habydies,
With alle the realles of Roodes, arayede with hymē one :
They sailede with a syde wynde ovre þe salte strandez :
Sodanly þe Sarezenes, as theme selfe lykede,

600 Craftyly at Cornett the kynges are aryesede,
ffra þe cetē of Rome sexti myle large :
Be that the Grekes ware graythede, a fullē gret nombyre,
The myghtyeste of Macedone, with mene of þa marches,

604 Pulle and Pruyslande presses with oþer,
The lege-mene of Lettow with legyons ynewe :
Thus they semble in sortes, summes fulle huge,
Sowdanes and Sarezenes owt of sere landes,

608 The Sowdane of Surry and sextene kynges,
At the cetes of Rome assemblede at ones.

Thanē yschewes þe Emperour armēde at ryghtys,
Arayede with his Romaynes appone ryche stedys ;

612 Sixty geauntes be-fore engenderide with fendez,
With weches and warlaws to wacchene his tentys ;
Ay-ware whare he wendes, wyntrez and ȝeres.
Myghte no blonkes theme bere, thos bustous churlles,

616 Bot coverde camellez of toures, enclosyde in maylez ;
He ayerez oute with alyenez ostes fulle huge,
Ewyne in-to Almayne, þat Arthure hade wonnyne ;
Rydes in by þe ryvere, and ryottez hymē selvene,

620 And ayeres with a huge wylle alle þas hye landez ;
Alle Westwale of werre he wynnys as hym lykes,
Drawes in by Danuby, and dubbez hys knyghtez ;
In the contrē of Colome castelles enseggez,

624 And suggeournez þat sesone wyth Sarazenes ynewe.

At the utas of Hillary, Syr Arthure hym-selvene
In his kydde councelle commande þe lordes,—
“ Kayere to ȝour cuntrez, and semble ȝour knyghtes,

628 And kepys me at Constantyne clenlyche arayede ;

From all the East
they came sailing
across the Greek
Sea in their
mighty ships
armed for war,

and assembed at
Civita,sixtymiles
from Rome.

There were of
Greeks a vast
number, and men
of Italy, with
Saracens from
many lands.

Then goes forth
the Emperor with
his knights.

Sixty giants born
of fiends, and
witches and war-
locks precede
him.

Riding upon
camels bearing
towers,

he marches into
Germany, and
lays it waste.

Meanwhile Ar-
thur commands
his knights to
gather their
forces, and to be
ready to meet
him.

Byddeſ me at Gareſtete apone þa blythe ſtremes,
 Baldly with-in borde with ȝowre beſte beryns;
 I ſchalle menſkfullly ȝowe mete in thos faire marches."

632 He ſendez furthe ſodaynly ſergeantes of armes,
 To alle hys mariners on rawe, to areſte hym ſchippys;
 Wyth-in ſextene dayes hys fleet whas аſſemblēde,
 At Sandewyche on þe ſee, ſaile whene hym lykes.

The fleet asſembles at Sandwich.

He holds a Par-liament at Yorke,

636 In the palez of ȝorke a perlement he haldez,
 With alle þe perez of þe rewme, prelates and oþer;
 And aftyre þe prechynge in preſence of lordes,
 The kyng in his concelle carpys þes wordes,—

640 "I am in purpoſe to paſſe perilous wayes,
 To kaire with my kene mene, to conqurer ȝone landes,
 To owttraye myne enmy, ȝif aventure it ſchewe,
 That occupyes myne heritaſe, þe empyre of Rome.

and appoints as 644 I ſett ȝow here a ſoveraynge, aſcente ȝif ȝowe lykys,
 That es me ſybb, my ſyſter ſone, Sir Mordrede hym ſelvene,
 Salle be my levetenante, with lordchipez ynewe,
 Of alle my lele lege-mene, þat my landes ȝemes."

648 He carpes tille his coſyne þane, in counſaile hym ſelvene,—
 "I make the kepare, ſyr knyghte, of kyngrykes manye,
 Wardayne wyrchipfull, to weilde al my landes,
 That I have wonnene of werre, in alle þis werlde ryche;

He bids him take 652 I wyll þat Waynour, my weife, in wyrchipe be holdene,
 care of Queen That hire waunte noo wele, ne welthe þat hire lykes;
 Guinever. Luke my kydde caſtells be clenlyche arrayede,
 and of his caſtles There cho maye ſuggourne hireſelfe, wyth ſemlyche
 and forreſts. berynes.

The Queen alone
 is allowed to hunt
 in his absence.

656 I faunde my fforeſteſ be ffrythede, o frenchepe for evere,
 That naue werreye my wylde, botte Waynour hir ſelvene,
 And þat in þe ſeſone whene greeſeſ eſ assignyde,
 That cho take hir ſolauce in certayne tyms

All officers are
 to be completely
 under his com-
 mand.

660 Chauncelere and chamburleyne chaunge as þe lykes,
 Audytours and offyceſ ordayne thy ſelvene,—
 Bathe jureeſ, and juggeſ, and justiceeſ of landes,
 Luke thou justyſye them eſ wele that injurye wyrkeſ:

664 If me be destaynede to dye at Dryghtyns wylle,
 I charge the my sektour, cheffe of alle oþer,
 To mynstre my mobles, fore mode of my saule,
 To mendynnantez and mysese in myschefe fallene :
 If Arthur dies
 Mordred is
 succeed him.

668 Take here my testament of tresoure fullē-huge,
 As I trayste appone the, be traye thowe me never !
 As þow wille answere be-fore the austeryne jugge,
 That alle þis werde wynly wysse as hymē lykes,
 He bids him be
 faithful to his
 trust,

672 Luke þat my laste wylle be lelely perfourmede !
 Thow has clenly þe cure that to my coroune langez,
 Of alle my werdez wele, and my weyffe eke ;
 Luke þowe kepe the so clere, there be no cause fondene ,

676 Whene I to contré come, if Cryste wille it thole,
 And thow have grace gudly to governe thy selvene,
 I sall coroune þe knyghte kyng with my handez.”
 Than¹ syr Modrede fullē myldly meles hym selvene ,

680 **T**Knelyd to þe conquerour, and carpes þise wordez,—
 “I be-seke ȝow, syr, as my sybbe lorde,
 þat ȝe wille for charyté cheese ȝow anoþer ;
 ffor if ȝe putte me in þis plytte, ȝowre pople es dyssavyde ;

684 To presente a prynce astate my powere es symple :
 Whene oþer of werre wysse are wyrchipide here-aftyre,
 Thane may I forsothe be sette bott at lyttile.
 To passe in ȝour presance my purpos es takyne ,

688 And alle my purveaunce apperte fore my pris knyghez.”
 “Thowe arte my nevewe fullē nere, my nurree of olde ,
 That I have chastyede and chosene, a childe of my chamyrc ;
 ffor the sybredyne of me, fore-sake noghte þis offyce

692 That thow ne wyrk my wille, thow whatte watte it menes.”
Nowe he takez hys leve, and lengez no langere ,
 At lordez, at lege-mene, þat leves hymē byhyndene .
 And seyne þat worthilyche wy went un-to chamyrc ,

696 ffor to comfurthe þe qwene, þat in care lenges ;
 Waynour waykly wepande hym kyssiz ,
 Talkez to hym tenderly with teres ynewe,—
 “I may wery the wye, that this werre movede ,

and promises to
 crown him king
 if he remain so .
^[1] Yan in MS.]

But Mordred de-
 sires to be ex-
 cused ,

and would rather
 go to the war .

But Arthur bade
 him, as his near-
 est of kin, to
 undertake the
 office .

Then Arthur
 takes leave of
 his Queen .

Guineverlaments
 his departure ,

700 That warnes me wyrchippe of my wedde lorde ;
 Alle my lykyng^e of lyfe owte of lande wendez,
 And I in langour am lefte, leve þe for evere !
 Schyne myghte I, dere lufe, dye in þour armes,

and would rather die in his arms.

704 Are I þis destanye of dule sulde drye by myne one ! ”
 “ Grefe þe noghte, Gaynour, fore Goddes lufe of hewene,
 Ne gruche noghte my ganggyng^e, it sall^e to gude turne !
 Thy wonrydez and thy wepyng^e woundez myne herte,

But Arthur bids her not to grieve,

708 I may noghte wit of þis woo, for alle þis werlde ryche ;
 I have made a kepare, a knyghte of thyne awene,
 Overlynge of Ynglande undyre thy selvene,
 And that es *syr* Mordrede, þat þow has mekylle praysede,

and tells her that he has made Mordred, a knight of her own, his deputy.

712 Salle be thy dictour, my dere, to doo whatte the lykes.”
 Thane he takes hys leve at ladys in chambyre,
 Kysside them kyndlyche, and to Criste be-teches ;
 And then cho swounes fulle swythe, whe[n] he hys
 swerde aschede,

716 Twys in a swounyng, swette as cho walde !
 He pressed to his palfray, in *presence* of lordes,
 Prekys of the palez *with* his prys knyghtes,
 Wyth a realle rowte of þe rounde table ;

720 Soughte to-warde Sandewyche, cho sees hym^e no more !
 Thare the grete ware gederyde, wyth galyarde knyghtes,
 Garneschit over þe grene felde and graythelyche arayede ;
 Dukkes and duzseperes daynttelyche rydes,

The king then departs hastily with his knights.

724 Erlez of Ynglande *with* archers ynewe :
 Schirreves scharply schiftys the comouns,
 Rewlys be-fore þe ryche of the rounde table,
 Assignez ilke a contree to certayne lordes,

At Sandwich all the lords and their followers assemble.

728 In the southe one þe see banke saile whene þem^e lykes
 Thane bargez theme buskez, and to þe baunke rowes,
 Bryngez blonkez one bourde, and burlyche helmes ;
 Trussez in tristly trappyde stedes,

Horses, arms, tents, clothing, and provisions are shipped.

732 Tentez and othire toylez, and targez fulle ryche,
 Cabanes *and* clathe sokkes, and coferez fulle noble,
 Hukes and haknays, and horsez of armez ;

Thus they stowe inē the stiffe of fullē steryne knyghtez.

736 **Q**wene alle was schyppede that scholde, they schouunte
no lengere,

Bot ventelde themē tyte, as þe tyde rynnez;

Coggez and crayers, þan crossez þaire mastez,

At the commandment of þe kynge, uncoverde at ones.

740 Wyghtly one þe wale thay wye up þaire ankers,

By wytt of þe watyre mene of þe wale ythez,

ffrekес one þe forestayne, fakene þeire coblez,

In floynes and fercestez, and Flemesche schyppes,

744 Tytt saillez to þe toppe, and turnez the lufe,

Standez appone stere-bourde, sterynly þay songene,

The pryce schippez of the porte provene theire depnesse,

And fondez wyth fulle saile ower the fawe ythez;

748 Holly with-owtynē harme þay hale in bottes,

Schipe-mene scharply schotene þaire portez,

Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene þer depez,

Lukkes to þe lade-sterne whene þe lyghte faillez;

752 Castez coursez be crafte, whene þe clowde rysez,

With þe nedylle and þe stone one þe nyghte tydez;

For drede of þe derke nyghte þay drecchede a lyttile,

And alle þe steryne of þe streme strekyne at onez:

756 The kynge was in a gret cogge, with knyghtez fulle many,

In a cabane enclosede, clenlyche arayede;

With-in on a ryche bedde rystys a lyttile,

And with þe swoghe of þe see in swefnyng he felle.

760 Hym dreymyd of a dragone, dredfullē to beholde,

Come dryfande one þe depe to drenschene hys pople,

Ewene walkande owte of the Weste landez,

Wanderande unworthyly overe the wale ythez;

764 Bothe his hede and hys hals ware halely alle over

Cundyde of azure, enamelde fulle faire:

His scoulders ware schalyde alle in clene sylvere,

Schreede over alle þe schrympe with schrinkande poyntez;

768 Hys wombe and hys wenges of wondyrfullē hewes,

In mervaylous maylys he mountede fulle hye;

Then the ships
at the word of
command cross
their yards,
weigh their an-
chors;
the well-skilled
sailors hoist the
sails and steer
the vessels.

Then they haul
in the boats, shut
the ports, heave
the lead, look well
to the guiding
star, and skil-
fully shape their
course by the
compass.

After a little de-
lay on account of
darkness, they all
sail at once.

The king is in a
large vessel with
many knights,

Reposing himself
in his cabin, he
falls asleep,

and dreams of a
dreadful dragon.

His head and
neck were blue;
his shoulders cov-
ered with silver
scales;

his belly and
wings of various
hues;

his feet were
black, and out of
his mouth there
came flame.

Then there came
against the dra-
gon a fierce black
bear,

with huge paws
and crooked
tusks,

mis-shapen legs,
and foaming lips.

He came capering
and mocking,

roaring and
raging for the
strife.

Then the dragon
assailed him,
fighting like a
falcon with beak
and claws.

The bear butts
him with his
tusks and causes
the blood to flow.

He had killed the
dragon but for
the fire which he
breathes.

Then the dragon
flies aloft, and
comes swooping
down,
tearing a vast
rent in the back
of the bear,

and carrying him
off in his claws,
lets him drop

Whayme þat he towchede he was tynt for ever!
Hys feete ware floreschede alle in fyne sabylle,
772 And syche a vennymous flayre flowe fro his lyppez,
That the flode of þe flawez alle one fyre semyde!
Thane come of þe oryente, ewyne hym agayne,
A blake bustous bere abwene in the clowdes,
776 With yche a pawe as a poste, and paumes fulle huge,
With pykes fulle perilous, alle plyande þame semyde,
Lothene and lothely, lokkes and oþer,
Alle with lutterde legges, lokerde unfaire;
780 Filtyrde unfrely wyth fomaunde lyppez,
The foullest of fegure that fourmede was ever!
He balyrde, he bleryde, he braundyschte þer-after;
To bataile he bounez hym with bustous clowez:
784 He romede, he rarede, that roggede alle þe erthe!
So ruydly he rappyd at to ryot hym selvene!
Thane the dragone on dreghe dressede hym aȝayne,
And with hys duttez hym drafte one dreghe by þe walkyne:
788 He fares as a fawcone, frekly he strykez;
Bothe with feete and with fyre he feghhtys at ones!
The bere in the bataile þe bygger hym semyde,
And byttes hym boldlye wyth balefulle tuskez;
792 Syche buffetez he hym rechez with hys brode klokes,
Hys brest and hys brathelle was blodye alle over!
He rawmpyde so ruydly that alle þe erthe ryfez,
Rynnande one reede blode as rayne of the hevene!
796 He hade wereyde the worme by wyghtnesse of strenghte,
Ne ware it fore þe wylde fyre þat he hym wyth defendez:
Thane wandyrs þe worme awaye to hys heghtez,
Comes glydande fro þe clowddez, and cowpez fulle evene;
800 Towchez hym wyth his talonnez, and terez hys rigge,
Be-twix þe taile and the toppe tene fote large!
Thus he brittenyd the bere, and broghte hym olyfe,
Lette hym falle in the flode, fleete whare hym lykes:
804 So they bryng þe bolde kyng bynne þe schippe burde,
þat nere he bristez for bale, one bede whare he lyggez.

Thanē waknez the wyese kynge, wery fore-travaillede,
 Takes hymē two phylozophirs, that folowede hymē ever,
 808 In the sevynē scyence the sutelestē fondene,
 The cony[n] geste of clergye undyre Cristē knowene;
 He tolde þēme of hys tourmente, þat tyme þat he slepede,
 "Drechede with a dragone, and syche a derfe beste,
 812 Has mad me fulle wery; þe telle me my swefene,
 Ore I mone swelte as swythe, as wysse me oure Lorde!"
 "Sir," saide þey sone thanē, thies sagge philosopherse,
 "The dragone þat þow dremyde of, so dredfulle to schewe,
 816 That come dryfande over þe deepe, to drynchene thy pople,
 Sothely and certayne thy selvene it es,
 That thus saillez over þe see with thy sekyre knyghez:
 The colurez þat ware castyne appone his clere wengez,
 820 May be thy kyngrykez alle, that thow has ryghte wonnyne;
 And the tachesesede taile, with tonges so huge,
 Be-takyns þis faire folke, that in thy fleet wendez.
 The bere that bryttenede was abowene in þe clowdez,
 824 Betakyns the tyrauntez þat tourmentez thy pople;
 Or elles with some gyaunt some journee sallē happyne,
 In syngulere batelle by þoure selfe one;
 And þow sallē hafe þe victorye thurghē helpe of oure Lorde,
 828 As þow in thy visione was opynly schewede!
 Of this dredfulle dreme ne drede the no more,
 Ne kare noghte, syr conquerour, bot comforth thy selvene;
 And thise þat saillez over þe see, with thy sekyre knyghez."
 832 With trumpezz thenē trystly, they trisene upē þaire saillez,
 And rowes over the ryche see, this rowtē alle at onez;
 The comely coste of Normandye they cachene fulle evene,
 And blythely at Barflete theis bolde are arryfede,
 836 And fyndys a flete there of frendez ynnewe,
 The floure and þe faire folke of fyftene rewmez;
 ffore kyngez and capytaynezy kepyde hymē fayre,
 As he at Carelele commaundede at Cristymessey hyn selvene.
 840 Be they had takene the lande, and tentez upē rerede,
 Comez a templere tyte, and towchide to þe kynge—

Then Arthur awaking was troubled at the dream, and sends for his two philosophers, men very learned in the seven sciences.

These wise men tell him that by the dragon is meant himself and his knights.

The bear signifies the tyrants who torment his people, or else some giant whom Arthur is destined to overthrow in battle.

Arthur is exhorted to be of good courage.

They speed on their way, and arrive on the coast of Normandy.

At Barflete they find a fleet of friends, the flower of fifteen realms.

When they had disembarked and pitched their tents, a Templar

comes to the
king,
and tells him of
a ferocious giant
who feeds upon
men and chil-
dren,

"Here es a teraunt be-syde that tourmentez thi pople,
A grett geaunte of geene, engenderde of fendez ;
844 He has fretyne of folke mo thane fyfe hondrethe,
And als fele fawntekyns of freeborne childyre !

This has bene his sustynaunce alle this sevne wynttere,
And þut es that sotte noghte sade, so wele hym it lykez !

848 In þe contree of Constantyne no kynde has he levede,
With-owtynne kydd castelles enclosid wyth walles,
That he ne has clenly distroyede alle the knave childyre,
And theme caryede to þe cragge, and clenly deworyde !

who had that
day captured the
Duchess of Brit-
tany, and carried
her to his den.

852 The duchez of Bretayne to daye has he takyne,¹
Beside Reynes as scho rade with hire ryche knyghttes ;
Ledd hyre to the mountayne, thare þat lede lenez,
To lye by that lady, aye whyls his lyfe lastez.

856 We folowede o ferrome moo thene fyfe hundrethe,
Of beryns, and of burgeys, and bachelers noble,
Bot he coverde the cragge ; cho cryede so lowde,
The care of þat creatoure cover salle I never !

She was the
flower of all
France,
and the fairest
lady on earth,

860 Scho was flour of alle Fraunce, or of fyfe rewmes,
And one of the fayreste that fourmede was evere,
The gentileste jowelle a-juggedede with lordes,
ffro Geene unto Gerone, by Jhesu of hevene !

cousin of Ar-
thur's Queen.

864 Scho was thy wifes cosyne, knowe it if þe lykez,
Commene of þe rycheste, that regnez in erthe :
As thow arte ryghtwise kynge rewe on thy pople,
And fande for to venge theme, that thus are rebuykyde !"

Then Sir Arthur
bitterly laments
her fate,

868 "Allas !" said *syr* Arthure, " so lange have I lyffede,
Hade I wytene of this, wele had me chafede ;
Me es noghte fallene faire, bot me es foule happynede,
That thus this faire ladye this fende has dystroyede !

and wishes he
had been there
to aid her.

872 I had levere thane alle Fraunce, this fyftene wynter
I hade bene be-fore thate freke, a furlange of waye,
Whene he that ladye had laghte and ledde to þe montez :
I hadde lefte my lyfe are cho hade harme lymppye !

¹ In the short romance of Arthur this unfortunate lady is described as fair Elaine, cousin to King Hoel.

876 Bot walde þow kene me to þe erage, thare þat kene lengez. He desires to know where the I walde cayre to þat coste, and carpe wythe hymē-selvenē, giant lives, To trete with that tyraunt fore tresone of londes, And take trewe for a tyme, tille it may tyde bettyre."

880 "Sire, see þe ȝone farlande, with ȝone two fyrez, þar filsuez þat fonde, fraist whene the lykes ? Appone the creste of the cragge, by a colde welle, That enclosez þe clyfe with þe clere strandez, and is directed by the Templar how to find his abode,

884 Ther may thow fynde folke fay wyth-owttyne nowmer, where there are Mo florenez in faythe thane Fraunce es in aftyre ; And more tresour untrewely that traytour has getyne, Thane in Troye was as I trowe, þat tyme þat it was wonne."

888 Thane romyez the ryche kynge for rewthe of þe pople, Raykez ryghte to a tente, and restez no lengere ! He welterys, he wristeles, he wryngez hys handez ! Thare was no wy of þis werlde, þat wyste whatt he menede ! Then Arthur is greatly excited,

892 He calles *syr* Cayous þat of þe cowpe serfede, And *syr* Bedvere þe bolde, þat bare hys brande ryche,— "Luke ȝe aftyre evensange be armyde at-ryghttez, On blonkez by ȝone buscayle, by ȝone blythe stremez, and bids Sir Cayous and Sir Bedevere attend him at evening,

896 ffore I wille passe in pilgremage prevely here aftyre, In the tyme of suppere, whene lordez are servede, ffor to sekene a saynte be ȝone salte stremes, In Seynt Mighelle mount, there myraclez are schewede." pretending that he is going on a pilgrimage.

900 Aftyre evesange, Sir Arthure hymē-se[1]fene Wente to hys wardrobe, and warpe of hys wedez ; Armede hym in a actone with orfraeez fulle ryche, Aboven one þat a jeryne of Acres owte over, Then Arthur proceeds to dress and arm himself,

904 Aboven þat a jesseraunt of jentylle maylez, A jupone of Jerodyne jaggede in schredez ; He brayedez one a bacenett burneschte of sylver, The beste þat was in Basille, wyth bordurs ryche ;

908 The creste and þe coronalle, enclosed so faire Wyth clasppis of clere golde, couched wyth stones ; The vesare, þe aventaile, enarmede so faire, Voyde with-owttyne vice, with wyndowes of sylver ;

912 His gloves gaylyche gilte, and graven ϵ at $\text{\textit{þe}}$ hemmez,
 With grayvez and gobelets, glorious of hewe;
 He bracez a brade schelde, and his brande aschez,
 Bounede hym ϵ a broun ϵ stede, and one $\text{\textit{þe}}$ bente hovys;

and mounting a
 brownsteed, rides
 to the spot where
 his knights await
 him.

916 He sterte till ϵ his sterepe and stridez one lofte,
 Streynez hym ϵ stowtly, and sterys hym ϵ faire,
 Brochez $\text{\textit{þe}}$ baye stede, and to $\text{\textit{þe}}$ buske rydez,
 And there hys knyghtes hym ϵ kepede fulle clenlyche
 arayede :

920 Thane they roode by $\text{\textit{þat}}$ ryver, $\text{\textit{þat}}$ rynnyd so swythe,
 Pare $\text{\textit{þe}}$ ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez ;
 The roo and $\text{\textit{þe}}$ rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
 In ranez and in rosers to ryotte $\text{\textit{þame}}$ selvene ;

924 The frithez ware floreschte with flourez fulle many,
 Wyth fawcouns and fesantez of ferlyche hewez ;
 All $\text{\textit{þe}}$ feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
 ffore thare galede $\text{\textit{þe}}$ gowke one grevez fulle lowde,

928 Wyth alkyne gladchipe $\text{\textit{þay}}$ gladdene $\text{\textit{þeme}}$ selvene :
 Of $\text{\textit{þe}}$ nyghtgale notez $\text{\textit{þe}}$ noisez was swette,
 They threpide wyth the throstills thre-hundreth at ones !
 $\text{\textit{þat}}$ whate swowyng ϵ of watyr, and syngynge of byrdez,

932 It myghte salve hym ϵ of sore, that sounde was nevere !
 Thane ferkez this folke, and one fotte lyghttez,
 ffestenez theire faire stede ϵ o ferrome by-twene ;
 And thene the kynge kenely comandyde hys knyghtez

936 ffor to byde with theire blonkez, and bowne no forthyre,—
 “ffore I wille seke this seynte by my-selfe one,
 And melle with this mayster mane, $\text{\textit{þat}}$ this monte $\text{\textit{ȝeme}}$;
 And seyne sall ϵ $\text{\textit{ȝe}}$ offyre, aythyre aftyre $\text{\textit{ȝer}},$

940 Menskfully at Saynt Mighelle fulle myghty with Criste !”
 The kyng coveris $\text{\textit{þe}}$ cragge wyth cloughes fulle hye,
 To the creste of the clyffe he clymbez one lofte ;
 Keste up ϵ hys umbrere, and kenly he lukes,

944 Caughte of $\text{\textit{þe}}$ colde wynde to comforte hym selvene ;
 Two fyrez he fyndez fflawmande fulle hye,
 The fourtedele a furlange be-twene $\text{\textit{þis}}$ he walkes ;

Here all birds
 abounded,

and nightingales
 in vast numbers
 made sweet mu-
 sic.

Here they leave
 their horses, and
 the king bids his
 knights to await
 his return.

The king alone
 ascends the
 mountain,

þe waye by þe welle strandez he wandyrd hym one,
 948 To wette of þe warlawe, whare þat he lengez ;

He ferkez to þe fyrste fyre, and evene there he fyndez
 A wery wafulle wedowe, wryngande hire handez,
 And gretande on a grave grysely teres,

and going to a
 fire which he sees
 he finds a woeful
 widow wringing
 her hands.

952 Now merkyde one molde, sene myddaye it semede :
 He saluȝede þat sorowfull with sittande wordez,

And fraynez aftyre the fende fairely there aftyre :
 Thane this wafulle wyfe un-wynly hym gretez,

He asks her con-
 cerning the giant.

956 Coverde up on hire kneess, and clappyde hir handez ;
 Said, “ carefull caremane, thow carpez to lowde !

May ȝone warlawe wyt, he worows us alle !

Weryd worthe þe wyghte ay, that þe thy wytt refede,

960 That mase the to wayfe here in þise wylde lakes !

I warne þe fore wyrchipe, þou wylnez aftyr sorowe !

Whedire buskes þou berne ? unblysside þow semes !

Wenez thow to brittene hym with thy brande ryche ?

964 Ware thow wyghttere thane Wade or Wawayne owthire,
 Thow wynnys no wyrchipe, I warne the be-fore !

Thow saynned the unsekyrly to seke to þese mountez,

Siche sex ware to symple to semble with hym one ;

968 ffor and thow see hym with syghte, the servez no herte,
 To sayne the sekerly, so semez hym huge !
 Thow arte frely and faire, and in thy fyrste flourez,
 Bot thow arte fay be my faythe, and þat me for-thynkkys !

972 Ware syche fyfty one a felde, or one a faire erthe,
 The freke walde with hys fyste felle ȝow at ones !

Loo ! here, the duchez dere, to daye was cho takyne,
 Depe dolvene and dede dyked in moldez ;

976 He hade morthirede this mylde be myddaye war rongene,
 With-owttyne mercy one molde, not watte it ment :
 He has forsed hir and fylede, and cho es fay levede ;
 He slew hir un-slely, and slitt hir to þe navylle !

Fifty such as Ar-
 thur he could fell
 with his fist.

980 And here have I bawmede hir, and beryede þer aftyr,
 ffor bale of þe botelesse, blythe be I never !
 Of alle þe frendrez cho hade, þere folowede none aftyre,

The poor Duchess
 had been ravish-
 ed and murdered
 by him, and the
 doleful widow,
 her foster-mo-
 ther, had buried
 her.

and would remain
there till death to
bewail her.

Then Arthur says
that he comes
from the great
King Arthur on
a mission to
treat with the
giant.

The old wife tells
him that he cares
nothing for laws
or treaties; that
he regards not
gold or treasure;

only he has a
famous kyrle cov-
ered with hair,

which is bordered
with the beards
of mighty kings,

which are sent
to him on each
Easter-eve.

He has long
wished for the
beard of Arthur,
and tried to force
the Breton kings
to get it for him.

If he has brought
the beard, he may

Bot I hir foster modyr of fyftene wynter!

984 To ferke of this farlande, fande sallē I never,
Bot here be foundene on felde, tille I be fay levede!"
Thane answers *syr* Arthure to þat alde wyf;
"I am comyne fra the conquerour, curtaise and gentille,
988 As one of þe hathelest of Arthur knyghtez,
Messenger to þis myx, for mendemente of þe pople,
To mele with this maister mane, that here this mounte
ȝemez;
To trete with this tyraunt for tresour of landez,
992 And take trew for a tyme, to bettyr may worthe."
"ȝa, thire wordis are bot waste," *quod* this wif thane,
"ffor bothe landez and lythes ffulle lyttile by he settes;
Of rentez ne of rede golde rekkez he never,
996 ffor he wille lenge owt of lawe, as hym-selfe thynkes,
With-owtene licence of lede, as lorde in his awene;
Bot he has a kyrtille one, kepide for hymē selvene,
That was sponene in Spayne with specyalle byrdez,
1000 And sythynē garnesicht in Grece fullē graythly to-gedirs,
That es hydede alle with hare hally al overe,
And bordyrde with the berdez of burlyche kyngez,
Crispid and kombide, that kempis may knawe
1004 I the kynge by his colour, in kythe there he lengez;
Here the fermez he fangez of fyftene rewmez,
ffor ilke Esterne ewyne, how-ever that it falle;
They send it hymē sothely for saughte of þe pople,
1008 Sekerly at þat sesone with certayne knyghtez,
And he has aschede Arthure alle þis sevēnē wynter.
fforthy hurdez he here, to owttraye hys pople,
Tille þe Bretones kynges have burneschte his lyppys,
1012 And sent his berde to that bolde wyth his beste berynes;
Bot thowe hafe broghte þat berde, bowne the no forthire,
ffor it es butellesse bale, thowe biddez oghte elles;
ffor he has more tresour to take whene hymē lykez,
1016 Than evere aughte Arthure, or any of hys elders;
If thowe hase broghte þe berde, he besē more blythe

Thane þowe gave hym Burgoyne, or Bretayne þe more ; be sure of a hearty welcome.

Bot luke nowe for charitee, þow chasty thy lypes,

1020 That the no wordez eschape, whate so be-tydez ; But he must approach him with due caution,

Luke þat presante be priste, and presse hym bott lyttille,

ffor he es at his sowper, he wille be sone grevyde ;

And þow my concelle doo, þow doffe of thy clothes,

1024 And knele in thy kyrtyle, and calle hym thy lorde ; and had better doff his clothes and kneel to him.

He sowppes alle þis sesone with sevene knave childre,

Choppid in a chargour of chalke whytt sylver,

With pekille and powdyre of precious spycez,

1028 And pymt fulle plentevous of Portyngale wynes ; His supper at this season is composed of seven male children chopped up with pickles and condiments.

Thre balefull birdez his brochez þey turne,

That byddez his bedgatt, his byddyngē to wyrche ;

Siche foure scholde be fay with-in foure hourez,

1032 Are his fylth ware filled, that his flesch ȝernes." Three savage birds act as turn-spits for him.

" ȝa, I have broghte þe berd," quod he, " the bettyre me "Yes," says Arthur, " I have indeed brought this beard ; but show me where I shall find him."

lykez ;

ffor-thi wille I bounē me, and bere it my selvenē ;

Bot lefe walde þow lere me whare þat lede lengez,

1036 I sallē alowe þe and I liffe, oure Lorde so me helpe!" Then she directs him to approach the great fire.

" fferke fast to þe fyre," quod cho, " that flawmez so hye ;

Thare fillis þat fende hymē, fraist whene the lykez ;

Bot thow moste seke more southe, syddyngēs a lyttile,

1040 ffor he wille hafe sent hym-selfe sex myle large." Arthur goes to the fire, and finds the giant lying extended with his back to the fire, picking the thigh of a man.

To þe sowre of þe reke he soghte at þe gayneste,

Sayned hymē sekerly with certayne wordez,

And sydlyngēs of þe segge the syghte had he rechide,

1044 How un-semly þat sott satt sowpande hym one ;

He lay levand one lange, bugande un-faire,

þe thee of a mans lymme lyfte up by þe haunche ;

His bakke and his bewschers, and his brode lendez,

1048 He bekez by þe bale fyre, and breklesse hymē semede ; Roasts of the flesh of children and cattle were spitted together, being prepared for him in various ways.

þare ware rostez fulle ruyde, and rewfullē bredez,

Beerynes and bestaile brochede to-geders ;

Cowle-fullē cramede of crysinedē childyre,

1052 Sum as brede brochede, and bierdez þame tournedē.

Then Arthur's
heart bleeds for
the woes inflicted
by this wretch.

He fastens on
his shield and
brandishes his 1056
bright sword,

and right boldly
addresses the
giant.

He upbraids
him with his vile
crimes and his
unclean meat.

For his horrible
murders of chris-
tian children,

he would now
take vengeance
on him, by the
aid of St. Michael,
and give his soul
to the devil.

Then the giant
stared with
amazement, and
gnashed his teeth
with fury.

Out of his mouth
there came
smoke, which
covered all his
face.

He was hook-
nosed like a
hawk, with hair
up to his eyes, and
beetle brows.

His skin was hard
as that of a dog-
fish ; his ears
huge and ugly ;
his eyes horrible
and burning.

And þane this comlyeh kynge, by-cause of his pople,
His herte bledez for bale, one bent ware he standez !

Thane he dressedede one his schelde, schuntes no lengere,
1056 Braundesche his brighte swerde by þe brygthe hiltez,
Raykez to-warde þe renke reghte with a ruyde wille,
And hyely hailsez þat hulke with hawtayne wordez,—
“ Now, alle-weldand Gode, þat wyrscoppez us alle,

1060 Giff the sorowe and syte, sotte there thow lygges,
ffor the fulsomeste freke that fourmede was evere !
ffouly thow fedys the, þe fende have thi saule !

Here es eury un-clene, carle, be my trowthe,
1064 Caffe of creatours alle, thow curssede wriche !

Be-eause that þow killide has þise cresmede childyre,
Thow has marters made, and broghte oute of lyfe,
þat here are brochede one bente, and brittenede with
thi handez,

1068 I sall merke þe thy mede, as þou has myche serfed,
Thurgh the myghte of Seynt Mighelle, þat þis monte ȝemes !
And for this faire ladye, þat þow has fey levyde,
And þus forced one foulde, for fylth of þi-selfene !

1072 Dresse the now, dogge, sone, the develle have þi saule !
ffor þow sall dye this day, thurgh dynt of my handez !”
Thane glopnede þe glotone and gloredæ un-faire ;
He grevede as a grewhounde, with grysly tuskes ;

1076 He gapede, he groned faste, with grucchandæ latez,
ffor grefe of þe gude kyng, þat hym with grame gretez !
His fax and his foretoppe was filterede to-geders,
And owte of his face fome ane halfe fote large ;

1080 His frount and his forhevede alle was it over,
As þe felle of a froske, and fraknede it semede,
Huke-nebbyde as a hawke, and a hore berde,
And herede to þe hole eyghne with hyngande browes ;

1084 Harske as a hunde-fisch, hardly who so lukez,
So was þe hyde of þat hulke hally al over !
Erne had he fulle huge, and ugly to schewe,
With eghne fulle horreble, and ardaunt for sothe ;

1088 flatt mowthede as a fluke, with fleryande lyppys,
And þe flesche in his fortethe fowly as a bere :
His berde was brothy and blake, þat tille his brest rechede,
Grassede as a mereswyne with corkes full* huge,

1092 And alle falterde þe flesche in his foule lyppys,
Ilke wrethe as a wolfe-hevede, it wraythe owtt at ones !
Bullenekkyde was þat bierne, and brade in the scholders,
Brok-brestede as a brawne, with brustils fulle large,

1096 Ruyd armes as an ake with rusclede sydes,
Lyme and leskes fulle lothyne, leve þe for sothe :
Schovelle-fotede was þat schalke, and schaylande hym
semyde,

With schankez unschaply, schowande to-gedyrs ;

1100 Thykke theefe as a thursse, and thikkere in the hanche,
Greesse growene as a galte, fulle grylych he lukez !
Who þe lenghe of þe lede lelly accountes,
ffro þe face to þe fote, was fyfe fadome lange !

1104 Thane stertez he up sturdely one two styffe schankez,
And sone he caughte hym a clubb alle of clene yryne !
He walde hafe kyllede þe kyng with his kene wapene,
Bot thurgh þe crafte of Cryste ȝit þe carle failede ;

1108 The creest and þe coronalle, þe claspes of sylver,
Clenly with his clubb he crasschede doun at onez !
The kyng castes up his schelde, and covers hym faire,
And with his burlyche brande a box he hym reches ;

1112 ffulle butt in þe frunt the fromonde he hittez,
That the burnyscht blade to þe brayne rynnez ;
He feyed his fysnamye with his foule hondez,
And frappez faste at hys face fersely þer-aftyr !

1116 The kyng chaungez his fote, eschewes a lyttile,
Ne had he eschapede þat choppe, chevede had evylle ;
He folowes in fersly, and festenesse a dynte
Hye upe one the haunche, with his harde wapyne,

1120 That he hillid the swerde halfe a fote large ;
The hott blode of þe hulke un-to the hilte rynnez,
Ewyne into inmette the gyaunt he hyttez,

Flat-mouthed,
with grinning
lips, and jaws
like a bear.
A black beard
reached to his
breast, with
mighty bristles.
The flesh of his
lips was in un-
even folds, each
fold, like an out-
law, twisted it-
self out.
He was bull-
necked and broad
in the shoulders ;
breasted like a
boar, with huge
bristles ; his arms
like an oak ; his
limbs and flanks
loathly ; shovelf-
ooted and scaly,
with unshaply
shanks ;
of gigantic thick-
ness in his
haunches.
Fat as a pig, he
looks horrible.

In height, full
five fathoms.

Up starts this
fell giant, and
seizing an iron
club, aims a blow
at Arthur.

The king catches
it on his shield,
and returns the
blow with his
sword right upon
the forehead.
The bright blade
pierces to the
brain.
The giant tears
his face with his
hands, and strikes
fiercely at the
king.
Arthur draws
back,

and then drives
his sword into the
giant's haunch.

The monster roars and strikes at random. So mighty is his stroke, that it penetrates a sword's length into the ground. The king nearly swoons at the noise of the blow, but quickly striking him, bursts asunder his groin. His entrails and blood gush out. Then throwing away his club, the giant seizes Arthur in his arms.

The baleful birds pray for the success of Arthur.

They have a fearful wrestling match, and fall from the top of the cliff down to the shore.

Arthur stabs the giant,

who in his death-struggle breaks three of Arthur's ribs.

His knights find him lying exhausted.

Just to *þe* genitales, and jaggede *þame* in sondre !

1124 Thane he romyed*e* and rarede, and ruydly he stryke*z*
ffulle egerly at Arthur, and one the erthe hitte*z*
A swerde lenghe with-in the swarthe, he swappez at ones,
That nere swounes *þe* kyng for swouge of his dyntte*z* !

1128 Bot *þit* the kynge swoperly fulle swythe he byswenke*z*,
Swappez in with the swerde *þat* it *þe* swange brysted*z* ;
Bothe *þe* gutte*z* and the gorre guschez owte at ones,
þat alle englaymez *þe* gresse, one grounde *þer* he standez !

1132 Thane he castez the clubb, and the kynge hente*z*,
On *þe* creeste of *þe* cragg he caughte hym*e* in armez,
And enclosez hym*e* clenly, to crusehene hys rybbe*z* ;
So harde haldez he *þat* hende, that nere his herte bryste*z* !

1136 *þane* *þe* balefulle bierdez bownez to *þe* erthe,
Knelande and cryande, and clappide *þe*ire handez,—
“Crist comforthe *þone* knyghte, and kepe hym fro sorowe,
And latte never *þone* fende felle hym*e* olyfe !”

1140 *þitt* es *þe* warlow so wyghte, he welters hym*e* undere,
Wrothely *þai* wrythyne and wrystille to-geder*z*,
With welters and walowes over with-in *þase* buske*z*,
Tumbellez and turnes faste, and terez *þaire* wedez,

1144 Untenderly fro *þe* toppe thai tiltine to-geder*z* ;
Whilome Arthure over, and *oper* while undyre,
ffro *þe* heghe of the hylle un-to the harde roche ;
They feyne never are they falle at *þe* flode merkes ;

1148 Bot Arthur with ane anlace egerly smytte*z*,
And hitte*z* ever in the hulke up to *þe* hilte*z* ;
þe theefe at *þe* dede thrawe so throly hym*e* thrynguez,
þat three rybbys in his syde he thryste*z* in sundere !

1152 Thenne *syr* Kayous the kene unto the kynge styrte*z*,—
Said, “allas ! we are lorne, my lorde es confundede,
Over fallene with a fende ! us es fulle hapnede !
We mone be forfeitede in faith, and flemide for ever !”

1156 *þay* hafe up hys hawberke *þane*, and handlez *þer*-undyre,
His hyde and his haunche eke, one heghte to *þe* schuldrez ;
His flawnke and his felete*z*, and his faire sydez,

Bothe his bakke and his breste, and his bryghte armez :

1160 *þ*ay ware fayne that they fande no flesche entamede,
And for þat journee made joye, þir gentille knyghtez;
"Now, certez," saise Sir Bedwere, "it semez, be my
Lorde !

They examine
him and find no
wound.

He sekez seyntez bot seldene, þe sorere he grypes,

1164 That thus cleyks this corsaunt owte of þir heghe clyffez,
To carye forthe siche a carle at close hym in silvere;
Be Myghelle of syche a makke, I hafe myche wondyre
That ever owre soveraygne Lorde suffers hym in hevene;

Sir Bedever
speaks face-
tiously of this
saint whom Ar-
thur had sought.

1168 And alle seyntez be syche, þat servez oure Lorde,
I sall never no seynt bee, be my fadyre sawle!"
Thane bourdez þe bolde kyng at Bedvere wordez,—
þis seynt have I soghte, so helpe me owre Lorde !

If all saints are
like him no saint
would he be.

1172 ffor-thy brayd owtte þi brande, and broche hym to þe
herte;

Arthur bids him
stab the monster
to the heart, to
make sure of him,
for only once be-
fore had he met
with such a ter-
rible foe.

Be sekere of this *sergeaunt*, he has me sore grevede !

I faghte noghte wyth syche a freke þis fyftene wyntyrs,
Bot in the montez of Araby I mett syche anoþer;

He bids them cut
off his head,

1176 He was þe forcyere be ferre þat had I nere fundene,
Ne had my fortune bene faire, fey had I levede !

Anone stryke of his hevede, and stake it there aftyre,
Gife it to thy sqwyere, fore he es wele horsede;

and bear it first

1180 Bere it to *syr* Howelle, þat es in harde bandez,
And byd hym herte hym wele, his enmy es destruede !

to Sir Hoel,

Syne bere it to Bareflete, and brace it in yryne,
And sett it on the barbycane, biernes to schewe;

then to Barflete,
and set it on the
barbican.

1184 My brande and my brode schelde apone þe bent lyggez,
On þe creeste of þe cragge, thare fyrste we encontredre,
And þe clubb þarby, alle of clene irene,
þat many Cristene has kyllide in Constantyne landez;

His sword and
shield and the
giant's club are
to be fetched from
the hill.

1188 fferke to the far-lande, and fetche me þat wapene,
And late founde tille oure flete, in flode þare it lengez :

If thou wylle any tresour, take whate the lykez;
Have I the kyrtylle and þe clubb, I coveite noghte elles!"

They may take
what treasure
they will; all Ar-
thur desires is the
kirtle and the
club.

1192 Now þey caire to þe cragge, þise comlyche knyghtez,

And broghte hym *þe* brade schelde, and his bryghte
wapene,

The affair was
kept a secret till
break of day.

The clubb and the cotte alles, Sir Kayous hym selvene,
And kayres with conquerour, the kyngez to schewe;

1196 That in coverte the kynge helde closse to hym selvene,
Whilles clene day fro *þe* clowde, clymbyd on lofte.

Be that to courte was comene clamour fulle huge,
And be-fore the comlyche kynge they knelyd alle at
ones,—

Then the people
kneel before Ar-
thur, and thank
and praise him
for slaying the
giant.

1200 "Welcome, oure liege lorde, to lang has thou duellyde!
Governour undyr Gode, graytheste and noble,
To whame grace es graunted, and gyffene at his wille!
Now thy comly come has comforthede us alle!"

1204 Thow has in thy realtee revengyde thy pople!
Thurghel hepe of thy hande, thyne enmyse are struyede,
That has thy renkes over-ronne, and refte theme theire
childeyre!

What never rewme owte of araye so redyly relevede!"

Arthur ascribes
all to God.

1208 Thane *þe* conquerour Cristenly carpez to his pople,
"Thankes Gode," quod he, "of *þis* grace, and no gome elles,
ffor it was never manes dede, bot myghte of Hymselfene,
Or myracle of hys modyre, þat mylde es tille alle!"

He bids his fol-
lowers distribute
the giant's trea-
sure among the
clergy and people.

1212 He somond þan *þe* schippemene scharpely þer-aftyre,
To schake furth with *þe* schyre mene to schifte *þe* gudez;
"Alle *þe* myche tresour that traytour had wonnene,
To commons of the contré, clergye ond oþer,

1216 Luke it be done and delte to my dere pople,
That none pleyne of theire parte, o peyne of *þour* lyfez."
He comande hys cosyne, with knyghtlyche wordez,

A church and
convent are to
be built on the
cliff.

1220 To make a kyrke on *þe* cragg, ther the corse lengez,
And a covent there-in, Criste for to serfe,
In mynde of þat martyre, þat in *þe* monte rystez.

When the giant
was slain, Arthur
moves from Bar-
flete to Castle
Blanc.

Q wen Sir Arthur the kynge had kylled *þe* gyaunt,
Than blythely fro Bareflete he buskes one *þe* morne,

1224 With his batelle one brede, by þa blythe stremes;

To-warde Castelle Blanke he chesez hym the waye,
 Thurghe a faire champayne, undyr schalke hyllis ;
 The kyng fraystez a-furth over the fresche strandez,
 1228 ffoundez with his faire folke over as hym lykez :
 ffurthe stepes that steryne, and strekez his tentis
 One a strenghe by a streme, in þas straytt landez.
 Onone aftyre middaye, in the mene-while,

1232 þare comez two messangeres of tha fere marchez,
 ffra þe marschalle of Fraunce, and menskfullly hym gretes,
 Besoghte hyme of sucour, and saide hyme thise wordez, —

Then come two messangeres from the Marshal of France, who acquaint Arthur

“ Sir, thi marschalle thi mynistre, thy mercy be-sekez,

1236 Of thy mekille magestee, fore mendement of thy pople,
 Of þise marchez-mene, that thus are myskaryede,
 And thus merred amange, maugree theire eghne ;
 I witter þe þe emperor es entirde into Fraunce,

with the mischief which the Emperor Lucius is working in France,

1240 With ostes of enmye, orrible and huge ;
 Brynnez in Burgoyne thy burghes so ryche,
 And brittenes thi baronage, that bieldez thare-in ;
 He encrochez kenely by craftez of armez,

seizing castles,

1244 Countrese and castelles þat to thy coroun langez ;
 Confoundez thy commons, clergy and oþer ;
 Bot thow comfurth theme, syr kynge, cover sall e they
 never !

confounding the commons,

He fellez forestez fele, forrayse thi landez,

felling forests,

1248 ffrysthez no fraunchez, bot fraisez the pople ;
 þus he fellez thi folke, and fangez theire gudez !
 ffremedly the Franche tung fey es be-lefede.

taking goods,

He drawes in-to douce Fraunce, as Duchemen tellez,
 1252 Dresside with his dragouns, dredfull to schewe ;
 Alle to dede they dyghte with dynnttys of swerddez,
 Dukez and dusperes, þat dreches thare-ine ;
 ffor-thy the lordez of the lande, ladys and oþer,

killing dukes and douze-peers.

1256 Prayes the for Petyr luffe, þe apostylle of Rome,
 Sen thow arte presant in place, þat þow wille profyre make
 To þat perilous prynce, be processe of tyme ;
 He ayers by ȝone hilles, ȝone heghe holtez undyr,

Therefore they desire Arthur's help.

1260 Hufes thare with hale strenghe of haythene kyngez ;
 Helpe nowe for His lufe, that heghe in hevene sittez,
 And talke tristly to theme, that thus us destroyes !”
 The kyng biddis *syr* Boice, “ buske the be-lyfe !

He sends some of his knights to the Emperor, 1264 Take with the *syr* Berille, and Bedwere the ryche,
 Sir Gawayne and *syr* Gryme, these galyarde knyghtez,
 And graythe ȝowe to ȝone grene wode, and gose over
 þer nedes ;
 Saise to *syr* Lucius, to unlordly he wyrkez,

1268 Thus letherly agaynes law to lede my pople ;
 I lette hymē or oghte lange, ȝif me þe lyffe happene,
 Or my lyghte sallē lawe, þat hymē overe lande folowes ;
 Comande hym kenely wyth crewelle wordez,

to bid him depart out of his kingdom, or meet him in single combat. 1272 Cayre owte of my kyngryke with his kydd knyghtez ;
 In caase that he wille noghte, þat cursede wreche,
 Come for his curtaisie, and countere me ones !
 Thane sallē we rekkene fulle rathe, whatt ryghte þat he
 claymēs,

1276 Thus to ryot þis rewme and raunsone the pople !
 Thare sallē it derely be delte with dynttez of handez :
 The Dryghtene at Domesdaye dele as hymē lykes !”
 Now thei graythe theme to goo, theis galyarde knyghtez,

The knights go on their errand glittering in gold upon greatsteeds. 1280 Alle gleterande in golde, appone grete stedes,
 To-warde þe grene wode, þat with growndene wapyne,
 To grete wele the grett lorde, that wolde be grefede sone ;
 Thise hende hovez on a hille by þe holte eynes,

They see the luxurious camp of the heathen kings, 1284 Be-helde þe howsyng fulle hye of Hathene kynges ;
 They herde in theire herbergage hundrethez fulle many,
 Hornez of olyfantez fulle helych blawene ;
 Palaisez proudliche pyghte, þat palyd ware ryche,

1288 Of palle and of purpure, wyth precyous stones ;
 Pensels and pomelle of ryche prynce armez,
 Fighte in þe playne mede, þe pople to schewe :
 And thane the Romayns so ryche had arayede their tentez

1292 On rawe by þe ryvere, undyre þe round hillez,
 The emperor for honour ewyne in the myddes,

Wyth egles al over ennelled so faire :

And saw hym and þe Sowdane, and senatours many,

1296 Seke to-warde a sale with sextene kyngez,

Syland softly in, swettly by theme selfene,

To sowpe withe þat soveraygne, fulle selcouthe metez.

Nowe they wende over the watyre, þise wyrchipfulle
knyghtez,

1300 Thurghe þe wode to þe wone, there the wyese rystez ;

Reght as þey hade weschene, and went to þe table,

Sir Wawayne þe worthethy un-wynly he spekes,—

“The myghte and þe majestee, that menskes us alle,

1304 That was merked and made thurghe þe myghte of hym-
selvene,

Gyffe þow sytte in þour sette, Sowdane and oþer,

That here are semblede in sale, unfawghte mott þe worthe !

And þe fals heretyke, þat emperour hym callez,

1308 That occupyes in erroure the empyre of Rome,

Sir Arthur herytage, þat honourable kynge,

That alle his auncestres aughte bot Utere hym one,

That ilke cursynge þat Cayme kaghte for his brothyre,

1312 Cleffe over the cukewalde, with croune ther thow lengez,
ffor the unlordlyeste lede þat I on lukede ever !

My lorde mervailles hym mekylle, mane, be my trouthe,

Why thow morthires his mene, þat no mysse serves,

1316 Commons of þe contré, clergye and oþer,

þat are noghte coupable þer-in, ne knawes noght in armez ;

ffor-thi the comelyche kynge, curtays and noble,

Comandez þe kenely to kaire of his landes,

1320 Ore elles for thy knyghthede encontre hym ones ;

Sen þow covettes the coroune, latte it be declarede !

I hafe dyschargide me here, chalange whoo lykez,

Be-fore alle thy chevalrye, cheftaynes and oþer :

1324 Schape us an ansuere, and schunte þow no lengere,

þat we may schifte at þe schorte, and schewe to my lorde.”

The emperour ansuerde wyth austeryne wordez,

“þe are with myne enmy, Sir Arthur hym selvene !

The Roman Emperor and the Sultan are going to banquet together.

The knights present themselves.

Sir Gawaine delivers the message,

and upbraids with haughty words the Roman Emperor ;

bids him depart, or try a single combat with Arthur.

He challenges all the knights of Rome.

The Emperor replies,

1328 It es none honour to me to owttray hys knyghtez,
 þoghe þe be irous mene, þat ayres one his nedez ;
 Bot say to thy soveraygne, I send hym thes wordez,
 Ne ware it for reverence of my ryche table,

threatening the
knights for their
audacity.

1332 þou sulde repent fulle rathe of þi ruyde wordez !
 Siche a rebawde as þowe rebuke any lordez,
 Wyth theire retenuz arrayede, fulle realle and noble !
 Here wille I suggourne, whilles me lefe thynkes,

He will stay in
Arthur's land as
long as he pleases,

1336 And sythene seke in by Sayne with solace þer-aftere ;
 Ensegge all þa cetese be the salte strandez,
 And seyne ryde in by Rone, þat rynnes so faire,
 And of alle his ryche castelles rusche doun þe wallez ;

and destroy his
cities and castles.

1340 I sallé noghte lefe in Paresche, by processe of tyme,
 His parte of a pechelyne, prove whene hym lykes !”
 “Now, certez,” sais *syr* Wawayne, “myche wondyre
 have I,
 þat syche an alfyne as thou dare speke syche wordez !

Whereupon Sir
Gawaine desires
himself to fight
with him,

1344 I had lever thene alle Fraunce, that hevede es of rewmes,
 ffyghte with the faythefully one felde be oure one.”
 Thane answers *syr* Gayous fulle gobbede wordes,—
 Was eme to þe emperour, and erle hym selfene,—

but Sir Gayous,
uncle to the
Roman Emperor,
answers and
charges the Brit-
ish knights with
being braggarts.

1348 “Evere ware þes Bretons braggars of olde !
 Loo ! how he brawles hym for hys bryghte wedes,
 As he myghte brytayne us alle with his brande ryche !
 ȝitt he berkes myche boste, ȝone boy þere he standes !”

1352 Thane greyde *syr* Gawayne at his grett wordes,
 Graythes to-warde þe come with grucchande herte ;
 With hys stelyne brande he strykes of hys hevede,
 And sterttes owtte to hys stede, and with his stale
 wendes !

On this Sir Ga-
waine rushes at
him and strikes
off his head.

Then the British
knights fly with
all speed.

1356 Thurghe þe wacches þey wente, thes wirchipfull
 knyghtez,
 And fyndez in theire fare waye wondyrlyche many ;
 Over the watyre þey wente by wyghtnesse of horses,
 And tuke wynde as þey walde by þe wodde hemes :

1360 Thane folous frekly one fote frekkes ynewe,

And of þe Romayns arrayed appone ryche stedes,

Chasede thurghe a champayne oure chevalrous knyghtez, The Romans give chase.

Tille a cheefe forest, one schalke white horses :

1364 Bot a freke alle in fyne golde, and fretted in selle,

Come forþermaste on a fresone, in flawinande wedes ;

A faire floreschte spere in fewtyre he castes,

And folowes faste one owre folke, and freschelye ascryez.

1368 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude appone a graye stede,

The foremost of the pursuers is slain by Sir Gawayne.

He gryppes hym a grete spere, and graythely hym hittez ;

Thurgh þe guttez in-to the gorre he gyrdes hym ewyne,

That the groundene stele glydez to his herte !

1372 The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde lyggez,

ffulle gryselyche gronande, for grefe of his woundez.

þane presez a preker ine, fulle proudly arayede,

That beres alle of pourpour, palyde with sylver :

1376 Byggly on a broune stede he profers fulle large ;

He was a Paynyme of Perse þat þus hym persuede.

Another knight, a paynim of Persia, by Sir Boys.

Sir Boys un-abaiste alle he buskes hym a-gaynes,

With a bustous launce he berez hym thurghe,

1380 þat þe breme and the brade schelde appone þe bente

lyggez !

And he brynguez furthe the blade, and bownez to his felowez.

Thane *syr* Foltemour of myghte, a man mekyll praysede,

Sir Foltemour seeks to avenge Sir Gayous,

Was movede one his manere, and manacede fulle faste ;

1384 He graythes to *syr* Gawayne graythely to wyrche,

ffor grefe of *syr* Gayous, þat es one grounde levede.

Thane *syr* Gawayne was glade ; agayne hym he rydez,

Wyth Galuth his gude swerde graythely hym hyttez ;

1388 The knyghte one þe coursere he clevede in sondyre,

but Sir Gawayne cleaves him asunder.

Clenlyche fro þe croune his corse he dyvysyde,

And þus he killez þe knyghte with his kydd wapene !

Than a ryche mane of Rome relyede to his byerns,—

Then a rich man of Rome suggests a retreat.

1392 "It sallé repent us fulle sore and we ryde forthire !

þone are bolde bosturs, þat syche bale wyrkez ;

It befelle hym fulle foule, þat þame so fyrste namede."

The rich Romans return,
but five thousand horsemen still pursue the knights,
and fall upon an ambush of Bretons,
who break out suddenly on them,
with shouts of "Arthur."

The Romans are defeated and driven back,
but the Senator Peter sends ten thousand men.
The Bretons are repulsed, and

1396 Thane þe riche Romayns retournes þaire brydilles
To þaire tentis in tene, telles theire lordez
How *syr* Marschalle de Mowne es on þe monte lefede,
ffore-justyde at that journee, for his grett japez.
Bot thare chasez one oure mene chevallrous knyghtez,

1400 ffyve thosande folke appone faire stedes,
ffaste to a foreste one a felle watyr,
That fillez fro þe falow see fyfty myle large.
Thare ware Bretons enbuschide, and banarettez noble,

1404 Of þe chevalrye cheefe of þe kyngez chambyre,
Seese theme chase oure mene, and changene þeire horsez,
And choppe doun cheftaynes, that they moste chargyde ;
Thane þe embuschement of Bretons brake owte at ones,

1408 Brothely at banere, and Bedwyne knyghtez,
Arrestede of þe Romayns, þat by þe fyrthe rydez,
Alle þe realeste renkes þat to Rome lengez ;
Thay iche on þe enmyse and egerly strykkys,

1412 Erles of Inglande, and Arthure ascryes,
Thrughe brenes and bryghte scheldez, brestez they thyrle,
Bretons of the boldeste with theire bryghte swerdez ;
Thare was Romayns over redyne, and ruydly wondye,

1416 Arrestede as rebawdez, with ryotous knyghtez !
The Romaynes owte of araye removede at ones,
And rydes awaye in a rowtte, for reddoure it semys !
To þe senatour Petyr a sandes-mane es commyne,

1420 And saide, " *Syr*, sekyrly, þour seggez are supprysside !"
Than tene thowsande mene he semblede at ones,
And sett sodanly one oure seggez, by þe salte strandez ;
Than ware Bretons abaiste, and grevede a lyttile,

1424 Bot þit the banerettez bolde, and bachellers noble,
Brekes that battailles with brestez of stedes ;
Sir Boice and his bolde mene myche bale wyrkes !
The Romaynes redyes þane, arrayez þame better,

1428 And al to-ruscheez oure mene withe theire ryste horsez,
Arrestede of the richeste of þe rounde table,
Over-rydez oure rerewarde, and grette rewthe wyrkes !

1432 Thane þe Bretons on þe bente habyddez no lengere,
Bot fleede to þe foreste, and the feelde levede ;
Sir Berylle es borne downe and *syr* Boice takene,
The beste of oure bolde mene unblythely wondye ;
Bot ȝitt oure stale one a strenghe stotais a lyttile,
Alle to-stonayede with þe strokes of þa steryne knygitez ;
Made sorowe fore theire soveraygne, that so þare was
nomene,
Be-soughte Gode of socure, sende whene hym lykyde !
Than commez *syr* Idrus, armede up at alle ryghttez,
1440 Wyth fyve hundrethe mene appone faire stedes,
ffraynez faste at oure folke freschely þare aftyre,
ȝif þer frendez ware ferre, þat one the felde foundide.
Thane sais *syr* Gawayne, “ so me God helpe !
1444 We hafe bene chased to daye, and chullede as hares,
Rebuyked with Romaynes appone þeire ryche stedes,
And we lurkede undyr lee as lowrande wreches !
I luke never one my lorde þe dayes of my lyfe,
1448 And we so lytherly hym helpe, þat hym so wele lykede !”
Thane the Bretons brothely brochez theire stedes,
And boldly in batelle appone þe bent rydes ;
Alle þe ferse mene be-fore frekly ascryes,
1452 fferkand in þe foreste, to freschene þame selfene ;
The Romaynes thane redyly arrayes theme bettyre,
One rawe on a rowm-felde, reghittez theire wapyns,
By þe ryche revare, and rewles þe pople ;
1456 And with reddour *syr* Boice es in areste haldene.
Now thei semblede unsaughte by þe salte strandez ;
Gladdly theis sekere mene settys þeire dynttez,
With lulfly launceez one lofte they luyschene to-gedyres,
1460 In Lorayne so lordlye on leppande stedes ;
Thare ware gomes thurghe girde with grundyne wapynes, *A fierce battle ensues.*
Grisely gayspande with grucchande lotes !
Grete lordes of Greke greffede so hye ;
1464 Swyftly with swerdes, they swappene there-aftyre,
Swappez doun e fulle sweperlye swelltande knyngitez,

That alle swelltez one swarthe, that they over swyngene,
Se many sweys in swoghe swounande att ones !

Sir Gawaine does mighty deeds of valour.

1468 Syr Gawayne the gracyous fulle graythelye he wyrkkes,
The gretteste he gretez wyth gryeslye wonderes ;
Wyth Galuth he gyrdez dounre fulle galyarde knyghtez,
ffore greefe of þe grett lorde so grymlye he strykez !

1472 He rydez furthe ryallye and redely there-aftyre,
Thare this realle renke was in areste haldene ;
He ryfez ye raunke stele, he ryghttez þeire brenez,
And reste themre the ryche mane, and rade to his strenghes,

The Senator Peter comes against him,

1476 The senatour Petur thane persewede hymre aftyre,
Thurgh þe presse of þe peple, wyth his prycce knyghttes ;
Appertly fore þe prysonere proves his strenghes,
Wyth prekers the proudeste that to þe presse lengez ;

1480 Wrothely one the wrange hande *syr* Gawayne he strykkes,
Wyth a wapene of were unwynely hymre hittez ;
The breny one þe bakhalse he brystez in sondyre !
Bot þit he broghte forthe *syr* Boyce, for alle þeire bale
he biernez !

Rejoiced at this the British press on more boldly.

1484 Thane þe Bretones boldly braggene þeire tromppez,
And fore blysse of *syr* Boyce was broghte owtte of bandez,
Boldely in batelle they bere dounre knyghtes ;
With brandes of broune stele they brettened maylez ;

1488 þay stekede stedys in stoure with stelenre wapynes,
And alle stowede wyth strenghe, þat stode themre agaynes !
Sir Idrus fitz Ewayne þane Arthur ascryeez,
Assemblez one þe senatour wyth sextene knyghtez,

1492 Of þe sekereste mene þat to oure syde lengede ;
Sodanly in a soppe they sette in att ones,
ffoynes faste att þe fore breste with flawmande swerdez,
And feghttes faste att þe fronte freschely þare aftyre ;

1496 ffelles fele on þe felde appone þe ferrere syde,
ffey on þe faire felde by þa fresche strandez ;
Bot *syr* Idrus fytz Ewayne anters hymre selvene,
And entters in anly, and egyrly strykez,

1500 Sekez to þe senatour and sesez his brydille,

but in spite of him Sir Gawaine rescues Sir Boice.

Sir Idrus, with sixteen knights, attacks the Senator,

Unsaughtely he saide hym these fittande wordez,—

“ *ȝelde þe, syr, ȝapely, ȝife þou þi lyfe ȝernez,* and takes him prisoner.

ffore gyfitez þat þow gyffe may, þou ȝeme now þe selfene; ;

1504 *ffore dredlez dreche þow, or droppe any wylez,*

Thow sall dy þis daye thorow dyntt of my handez!”

“ *I ascente,” quod þe senatour, “ so me Criste helpe!*

So þat I be safe broghte before the kynge selvene;

1508 *Raunsone me resonabillye, as I may over reche,*

Aftyre my renttez in Rome may redyly forthire.”

*Thane answers *syr* Idrus with austeryne wordez,*

“ *Thow sall hafe condycyone, as the kynge lykes,*

1512 *Whene thow comes to þe kyth there the courte haldez;*

In caase his concelle bee to kepe the no langere,

To be killyde at his commandment his knyghtez be-fore.”

þayledde hym furthe in þerowte, and lached ofe his wedes,

1516 *Lefte hym wyth Lyonelle, and Lowelle hys brothire,*

O-lawe in þe launde þane, by þe lythe strandez.

Sir Lucius legge-mene loste are fore ever!

He gives the Senator into the charge of Sir Lionel and Sir Lowell.

The senatour Petur es prysoner takyne !

1520 *Of Perce and of Porte Jaffe fulle many price knyghtez,*

And myche pople wyth alle, perischede þame selfene !

ffor presse of þe passage, they plungede at onez !

Thare myghte mene see Romayne rewfully wondyde,

1524 *Over-redyne with renkes of the round table !*

Many of the Romans are slain.

In þe raike of þe furthe they rightene theire brenys,

þat rane alle one reede blode redylye alle over ;

They raughte in þe rerewarde fulle ryotous knyghtez,

1528 *ffor raumsone of rede golde and realle stedys ;*

Radly relayes, and restez theire horsez,

In rowtto to þe ryche kynge they rade al at onez.

A knyghte cayrez be-fore, and to þe kynge telles,—

1532 “ *Sir, here commez thy messangerez with myrthez fro*

The knights ride back towards the king, and send him the news of their success.

þe mountez,

þay hafe bene machede to daye with mene of þe marchez,

ffore-maglede¹ in þe marras with mervailous knyghtez !

¹ Halliwell reads “ fore manglede.”

They tell him that they have slain fifty thousand men,

We hafe foughtene in faithe, by ȝone fresche strandez,

1536 With þe frekkest folke that to þi foo langez ;
ffyfty thosaunde one felde of ferse mene of armez,
Wyth-in a furlange of waye, fay ere by-lefede !

We hafe eschewede þis chekke, thurgh chance of oure
Lorde,

and taken prisoners the chief Chancellor and the Senator Peter, as well as many paynims.

1540 Of tha chevalrous mene that chargede thy pople !

The cheefe chaunchelere of Rome, a cheftayne fulle noble,
Wille aske þe chartyre of pesse for charitee hym selfene ;
And the senatour Petire to presone es takyne.

1544 Of Perse and of Porte Jaffe Paynymmez ynewe
Comez prekande in the presse, with thy prysse knyghtez,
With poverte in thi presone theire paynez to drye ;
I be-seke ȝow, sir, say whate ȝowe lykes,

1548 Whethire þe suffyre theme saughte, or sone delyverde :
þe may have fore þe senatour sextie horse chargede
Of silver be Seterdaye, fulle sekyrly payede,
And for þe cheefe chauncelere, þe chevalere noble,

Arthur may demand sixty horse-loads of silver for the Senator,

and for the Chancellor, chariots full of gold.

The other prisoners may be kept until their rents are known.

All Arthur's men had escaped, save Sir Ewaine, who was wounded.

The king rejoices.

1552 Charottez chokkefull charegyde with golde ;
The remenaunt of þe Romayne be in areste haldene,
Tille thiere renttez in Rome be rightewissly knawene.
I be-seke ȝow, sir, certyfye ȝone lordez,

1556 ȝif ȝewille send þame over þe see, or kepe þame ȝourselfene :
Alle ȝour sekyre mene forsothe sounde are by-levyde,
Save syr Ewayne fytz Henry es in þe side wonddede."
"Crist be thankyde," quod the kynge, "and hys clere
modyre,

The fate of battle, he says, is in the hands of God.

1560 That ȝowe comforthede and helpede be crafte of hym
selfene ;
Skilfull skomfyture he skiftez as hym lykez,
Is none so skathlye may shape, ne skewe fro his handes ;
Desteny and doughtynes of dedys of armes,

He thanks the knight for his tidings, and gives him for reward the city of Thoulouse.

1564 Alle es demyd and delte at Dryghtynez wille !
I kwne the thanke for thy come, it comfortes us alle !
Sir knyghte," sais þe conquerour, "so me Criste helpe !
I ȝif the for thy thyȝandez Tolouse þe riche,

1568 The tolle and þe tachementez, tavernez and oþer,
 The towne and the tenementez with towrez so hye,
 That towchez to the temperaltee, whilles my tyme lastez :
 Bot say to the senatour I sende hym þes wordez,

1572 Thare sallē no silver hym save, bot Ewayne recoverē ;
 I had lever see hym synke one the salte strandez,
 Than the seegge ware seke, þat es so sore woundede ;
 I sallē disseverē that sorte, so me Criste helpe !

1576 And sett themē fulle solytarie, in sere kyngez landez :
 Sallē he never sownde see his seynowres in Rome,
 Ne sitt in þe assemblē, in syghte wyth his feris ;
 ffor it comes to no kynge þat conquerour es holdene,

1580 To comone with his captifis fore covatys of silver :
 It come never of knyghthede, knawe it ȝif hym lyke,
 To carpe of coseri, whene captifis ere takyne ;
 It aughte to no presoners to prese no lordez,

1584 Ne come in presens of pryncez, whene partyes are movede :
 Comaunde ȝone constable, þe castelle þat ȝemes,
 That he be clenlyche kepede, and in close haldene ;
 He sallē have maundement to morne or myddaye be

roungene,

1588 To what marche þay sallē merke, with mangere to lengene.”
 þay convaye this captyfe with clene mene of armez,
 And kend hym to þe constable, alles þe kynge byddez ;
 And seyne to Arthure þey ayre, and egerly hym towchez

1592 The answere of þe emperour, irows of dedez.
 Thane syr Arthure one erthe, atheliste of oþere,
 At evene at his awene borde avantid his lordez,—
 “ Me aughte to honour themē in erthe over alle oþer
 thyngez,

1596 þat þus in myne absens awnters þeme selfene ;
 I sallē themē luffe whylez I lyffe, so me our Lorde helpe !
 And gyfe þeme landys fulle large, whare themē beste
 lykes ;

Thay sallē noghte lesse, one þis layke, ȝif me lyfe happenē,

1600 þat þus are lamede for my lufe be þis lythe strandez.”

The Senator shall not be ransomed save Sir Ewaine recovers.

The others shall be divided into different countries.

Arthur holds that to accept ransom becomes not a king.

They are to take the Senator to the Constable and bid him keep him safe.

The knights obey, and then return to Arthur to give him the Emperor's message.

Arthur greatly commends his knights for their boldness, and promises them rewards.

In the morning
Sir Cador and his
knights are bid
to take the pri-
soners

to Paris, and to
give them into
the care of the
Provost.

The British
knights depart
towards Chartres.

But the Emperor
had dispatched a
chosen band to
intercept them.

Bot in þe clere daweyng, þe dere kynge hym selfene
Comaundyd *syr Cadore* with his dere knyghttes,
Sir Cleremus, sir Cleremonde, with clene mene of armez,

1604 Sir Clowdmur, *syr Clegis*, to convaye theis lordez ;
Sir Boyce and *syr Berelle* with baners displayede,
Sir Bawdwyne, *syr Bryane*, and *syr Bedwere* the ryche,
Sir Raynalde and *syr Richere*, Rawlaundes childyre,

1608 To ryde with þe Romaynes in rowte wyth theire feres.
“ Prekez now prevalye to Paris the ryche,
Wyth Petir the prissonere and his price knyghtez ;
Be-teche þam þe proveste, in presens of lordez,

1612 O Payne and o perelle þat pendes there too,
That they be weisely wachede and in warde holdene,
Wardede of warantizez with wyrchipfull knyghtez ;
Wagge hym wyghte mene, and woonde for no silvre ;

1616 I haffe warnede þat wy, be ware ȝife hym lykes !”

Now bownes þe Bretones, als þe kynge byddeze,
Buskez theire batelles, theire baners displayez ;
To-wardez Chartris they chese, these chevalrous
knyghtez,

1620 And in the champayne lande fulle faire þay eschewede :
ffor þe emperor of myghte had ordande hym selfene
Sir Utolfe and sir Ewandyre, two honourable kyngez,
Erles of þe Orient, with austeryne knyghtez,

1624 Of þe awntrouseste mene þat to his oste lengede,
Sir Sextynour of Lyby and Senatours many,
The kynge of Surrye hym-selfe with Sarazynes ynewe,
The senatour of Sutere wyth sowmes fulle huge,

1628 Whas assygnede to þat courte be sent of his peres,
Traise to-warde Troyes þe tresone to wyrke,
To hafe be-trappedpe with a trayne oure travelande
knyghtez,

That hade persayfede þat Peter at Parys sulde lenge,

1632 In presonne with þe provoste, his paynez to drye.
ffor-thi they buskede theme bowne with baners dis-
playede,

In the buskayle of his waye, on blonkkes full^e hugge ;
Planttez theme in the pathe with powere arrayede,

They take up a position in the path of Arthur's men.

1636 To pyke up þe prisoners fro oure pryse knyghtez.

Syr Cadore of Cornewalle comaundez his peris,
Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremus, *syr* Cleremownde þe noble,

“Here es þe close of Clyme with clewes so hye ;

Sir Cador keeps a sharp look out,

1640 Lokez the contree be clere, the corners are large ;
Discoveres now sekerly skrogges and oþer,
That no skathelle in þe skroggez skorne us here aftyre ;
Loke þe skyste it so þat us no skathe lympe,
1644 ffor na skomfitoure in skoulkery is skomfite ever.”

Now they hye to þe holte, thes harageous knyghtez,
To herkene of þe hye mene to helpene theis lordez ;

and discovers the enemy, armed and mounted, waiting by the skirts of a wood.

1648 Hovande one þe hye waye by þe holte hemmes.

With knyghtly contenaunce Sir Clegis hym selfene
Kryes to þe companye, and carpes thees wordez,—

Sir Clegis challenges any knight among them to the combat.

1652 Wille kyth for his kynge lufe craftes of armes ?

We are comene fro the kyng of þis lythe ryche,
That knawene es for conquerour, corownde in erthe,
His ryche retenuz here alle of his round table,

1656 To ryde with þat realle in rowtte where hym lykes ;

We seke justynges of werre, ȝif any wille happyne,
Of þe jolyeste mene a-juggede be lordes ;
If here be any hathelle mane, erle or oþer,

1660 That for þe emperour lufe wille awntere hym-selfene.”

And ane erle þane in angerd answeres hym sone,—

“ Me angers at Arthure, and att his hathelle bierns,
That thus in his errorre occupyes theis rewmes ;

1664 And owtrayes þe emperour, his erthely lorde !

The araye and þe ryalltez of þe rounde table
Es wyth rankour rehersede in rewmes full^e many ;
Of oure renttez of Rome syche revelle he haldys,

1668 Ne sall^e ȝife resoun^e full^e rathe, ȝif us reghte happene,

An earl of the Roman party upbraids Arthur and his knights.

That many *salle* repente that in his rowtte rydez,
ffor the reklesse roy so rewlez hym-selfene!"

Sir Clegis glorifies Arthur,

"A!" sais *syr* Clegis þane, "so me Criste helpe!"

1672 I knawe be thi carpyng a cowntere þe semes!
Bot be þou auditoure or erle, or emperour thi-selfene,
Appone Arthurez by-halve I answere the sone:
The renke so realle, þat rewlez us alle,

1676 The ryotous mene and þe ryche of þe rounde table,
He has araysede his accownte, and redde alle his rollez,
ffor he wylle gyfe a rekenyng that rewe *salle* aftyre,
That alle þe ryche *salle* repente þat to Rome langez,

1680 Or þe rereage be requit of rentez þat he claymez!
We crafe of þour curtaisie three coursez of werre,
And claymez of knyghthode, take kepe to þour selfene!
þe do bott trayne us to daye wyth trofelande wordez!

1684 Of syche travaylande mene trecherye me thynkes!
Sende owte sadly certayne knyghtez,
Or say me sekerly sothe, for sake ȝif þowe lykes."

1688 **T**hanе sais þe kynge of Surry, "Alls save me oure Lorde!
ȝif þow hufe alle þe daye, þou bees noghte delyverede,
Bot thou sekerly ensure with certeyne knyghtez,
þat þi cote and thi breste be knawene with lordez,
Of armes of ancestrye entyrd with londez."

1692 "Sir kyng," sais *syr* Clegys, "fulle knyghtly þow
askez:
I trowe it be for cowardys thou carpes thes wordez:
Myne armez are of ancestrye enveryde with lordez,
And has in banere bene borne sene *syr* Brut tyme;

1696 At the cité of Troye þat tymme was ensegede,
Ofte seene in asawte with certayne knyghtez,
ffro þe Borghte broghte us and alle oure bolde elders,
To Bretayne þe braddere, with-in chippe-burdez."

1700 "Sir," sais *syr* Sextenour, "saye what þe lykez,
And we *salle* suffyre the, als us beste semes;
Luke thi troumppez be trussede, and trofuller no lengere,
ffor þoghe þou tarye alle þe daye, the tyddes no bettyr!"

and boasts that
he will punish
well the Romans.

He desires three
courses of war
with any knights
whom they will
send.

The King of Syria
insinuates that
Sir Clegis may
not be of noble
ancestry.

Sir Clegis replies
scornfully that
his ancestors
were at the siege
of Troy.

Sir Sextenour
declares that the
Romans are
ready for the
fray.

1704 ffor there sallē never Romayne, þat in my rowt rydez,
 Be with rebawdez rebuykyde, whills I in werlē regne !”

Thane *syr* Clegis to þe kynge a lyttile enclinede,
 Kayres to *syr* Cadore, and knyghtly hym tellez,—

1708 “We have foundene in ȝone firthe, floreschede with leves,
 þe flour of þe faireste folke þat to þi foo langez,
 fifty thosandez of folke of ferse mene of armez,
 þat faire are fewteride on frounte undyr ȝone fre-bowes ;

1712 They are enbuschede one blonkkes, with baners dis-
 playede,

In ȝone bechene wode appone the waye sydes ;
 Thay hafe the furthe forsette alle of þe faire watyre,
 That fayfully of force feghete us byhowys ;

1716 ffor thus us schappes to daye, schortly to telle,
 Whedyre we schone or schewe, schyst as þe lykes.”

“ Nay,” *quod* Cadore, “ so me Criste helpe !
 It ware schame þat we scholde schone for so lyttyle !

1720 Sir Lancelott sallē never laughe, þat with þe kyng
 lengez,

That I sulde lette my waye for lede appone erthe ;
 I sallē be dede and undone ar I here dreche,
 ffor drede of any dogge-sone in ȝone dymē schawes !”

1724 **S**yр Cadore thane knyghtly comforthes his pople,
 And with corage kene he karpes þes wordes,—
 “ Thynk one þe valyaunt prynce þat vesettez us ever,
 With landez and lordscheppez, whare us beste lykes ;

1728 That has us ducheres delte, and dubbyde us knyghttez,
 Gifene us gersoms and golde, and gardwynes many ;
 Grewhoundes and grett horse, and alkyne gamnes,
 That gaynez tille any gome, that undyre God benez ;

1732 Thynke one riche renoune of þe rounde table,
 And late it never be refte us fore Romayne in erthe ;
 ffeyne ȝow noghte feyntly, ne frythes no wapyns,
 Bot luke þe fyghe faythefully, frekes ȝour-selfene ;

1736 I walde be wellyde alle qwyke, and quarterde in sondre,
 Bot I wyrke my dede, whils I in wrethe lenge.”

Sir Clegis tells
 Sir Cador that a
 vast number of
 the enemy are
 drawn up in the
 wood,

and suggests a
 retreat.

Sir Cador scorns
 to retreat.

Never shall Sir
 Lancelot laugh
 at him.

He will die be-
 fore he turn back
 for any dog's son
 of them all.

Sir Cador exhorts
 his men, and tells
 them of the good
 deeds of Arthur.

Than this doughty duke dubbyd his knyghtez,
Joneke and Askanere, Aladuke and oþer,

1740 That ayerez were of Esex, and alle þase este marchez ;
Howelle and Hardelfe, happy in armez,
Sir Herylle and sir Herygalle, þise harageouse knyghtez :
Than the soverayne assignede certayne lordez,

To certain of them he gives the prisoner in charge. 1744 Sir Wawayne, syr Uryelle, Sir Bedwere þe riche,
Raynallde and Richeere, and Rowlandez childyre,—
“Takez kepe one this prynce with þoure price knyghtez,
And ȝife we in þe stour withstondene the better,

1748 Standez here in this stede, and stirrez no forthire ;
And ȝif þe chaunce falle þat we bee over-charggede,
Eschewes to some castelle, and chewyse ȝour-selfene ;
Or ryde to þe riche kynge ȝif ȝow roo happyne,

1752 And bidde hym come redily to rescewe hys biernez.”
And than the Bretons brothely embrassez þeire scheldez,
Braydez one bacenetez, and buskes theire launcez.
Thus he fittez his folke, and to þe felde rydez,

1756 fff hundred one a frounte fewtrede at onez !
With trompes þay trine, and trappede stedes,
With cornettes and clarions, and clergialle notes ;
Schokkes in with a schakke, and schontez no langere,

1760 There schawes ware scheene undyr þe schire eynez.
And thane the Romayne rowtte remowes a lyttle,
Raykes with a rerewarde þas realle knyghtez ;
So raply þay ryde thare, that alle þe rowte rynges,

1764 Of ryves and rauke stele, and ryche golde maylez ;
Thane schotte owtte of þe schawe schiltounis many,
With scharpe wapynes of ware schotande at ones :
The kynge of Lebe be-fore the wawarde he ledez,

1768 And alle his lele lige mene o laundone ascriez :
Thane this cruelle kynge castis in fewtire,
Kaghte hym a coverde horse, and his course haldez,
Beris to syr Berille, and brathely hym hittes,

1772 Throwghe golet and gorgere he hurtez hym ewyne !
The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde liggez,

He dubs some of them knights.

If he is defeated, they are to convey him to some castle, or to Arthur.

The British prepare for the fight.

The fight begins.

The King of Lebe leads on the enemy.

He attacks Sir Berrill and slays him.

And gretez graythely to Gode, and gyffes hym þe saule !
 Thus es Berelle the bolde broghte owtte of lyve,
 1776 And byddez aftyre Beryelle, þat hym beste lykez.
 And thane *syr* Cador of Cornewayle es carefull in herte, Sir Cador is over-
 Be-cause of his kynysse mane, þat þus es myscaryede ; whelmed with
 Umbeclappes the cors, and kyssez hyme ofte,
 1780 Gerte kepe hym coverte with his clere knyghtez. grief for his loss.
 Thane laughes the Lebe kynge, and alle on lowde meles, — The King of Lebe
 “Zone lorde es lyghttede ! me lykes the bettyre ! ridicules him.
 He sallé noghte dere us to daye, the devylle have [his]
 bones !”

1784 “Zone kynge,” said Cador, “karpes fulle large,
 Be-cause he killyd þis kene ; Criste hafe þi saule ! Sir Cador vows
 He sallé hafe corne bote, so me Criste helpe ! vengeance.
 Or I kaire of þis coste, we sallé encontre ones !

1788 So may þe wynde weile turnne, I quytte hym or ewyne,
 Sothely hym selfene, or summe of his ferez !”

Thane *syr* Cador þe kene knyghtly he wyrkez,
 Cryez, “A ! Cornewale,” and castez in fewtere,
 1792 Girdez streke thourgh þe stour on a stede ryche ! He enacts great
 Many steryne mane he steride by strenghe of hymone ! deeds of valour.
 Whene his spere was spongene, he spedē hym fulle ȝerne,
 Swappedpe owtte with a swerde, that swykede hym never,
 1796 Wroghte wayes fulle wyde, and wounded knyghtez ; When his lance
 Wyrkez his in wayfare fulle werkand sydez, is broken he
 And hewes of þe hardieste halsez in sondyre, fights with his
 That alle blendez with blode thare his blanke rynnez ! sword.

1800 So many biernez the bolde broughte owt of lyfe,
 Tittez tirauntez doun, and temez theire sadilles,
 And turnez owt of þe toile, whene hym tyme thynkkez !

Thane the Lebe kynge criez fulle lowde Then the King of
 1804 One *syr* Cador the kene, with cruelle wordez, Lebe ironically
 Thowe hase wyrchipe wonne, and wondyde knyghtez ! praises his deeds.
 Thowe wenes fore thi wightenez the werlde es thy nowene !
 I sallé wayte at thyne honnde, wy, be my trowthe !
 1808 I have warnede þe wele, beware þif the lykez !”

The new-made
knights, with
sound of trum-
pets and spears
in rest, rush to
the fray.

1812 ffellede at þe fyrste come fyfty att ones !

With cornuse and clariones þeis newe made knyghtez
Lythes un-to þe crye, and castez in fewtire ;
fferkes in one a ffrounte one fferaunte stede,

1812 ffellede at þe fyrste come fyfty att ones !

Schotte thorowe the schiltrouns, and scheverede launcez,
Laid doun in þe lumppe lordly biernez !

And thus nobilly oure newe mene notez þeire strenghez.

1816 Bot new notte es onone þat noyes me sore ;

The kynge of Lebe has laughte a stede þat hym lykede,
And comes in lordely in lyonez of silvere,
Umbelappez þe lumpe, and lattes in sondre ;

1820 Many lede with his launce þe liffe has he refede !

Thus he chaces þe childire of þe kyngez chambire,
And killez in þe champanyse chevalrous knyghtez !
With a chasynye spere he choppes doun many !

1824 Thare was *syr* Alyduke slayne, and Achinour wondyde,

Sir Origge and *syr* Ermyngalle hewene al to pecez !

And ther was Lewlyne laughte, and Lewlyns brothire,
With lordez of Lebe, and lede to þeire strenghez :

Had not Sir Clegis and Sir Clement come,
the new men had gone to nought.

1828 Ne hade *syr* Clegis comene, and Clemente þe noble,
Oure newe mene hade gone to noghte, and many ma oþer.

Thanе sir Cador the kene castez in fewtire

Then Sir Cador puts his lance in rest, and strikes the King of Lebe fair on the helmet.

1832 Hittez hym heghe one the helme with his harde wapene,

That alle the hotte blode of hym to his hande rynnez !

The heathen king falls to the ground mortally wounded.

1832 Hittez hym heghe one the helme with his harde wapene,

That alle the hotte blode of hym to his hande rynnez !

The hethene harageous kynge appone þe hethe lyggez,
And of his hertly hurte helyde he never !

1836 Thane *syr* Cador þe kene cryez fulle lowde,—

“ Thow has corne botte, *syr* kynge, þare God gyfe þe
sorowe,

Thow killyde my cosyne, my kare es the lesse !

Kele the nowe in the claye, and comforthe thi selfene !

1840 Thow skorneede us langere with thi skornefulle wordez,

And nowe has þow chevede soo ; it es thyne awene skathe !

Holde at þow hente has, it harmez bot lyttile,
ffor hethynge es hame holde, use it who so wille.”

1844 **T**he kyng of Surry þane es sorowfull in herte,
ffor sake of this soveraygne, þat þus was supprisede;
Semblede his Sarazenes, and senatours manye :
Unsaughtly þey sette thane appone oure sere knyghtez ;

1848 Sir Cador of Cornewaile he cownterez themε sone,
With his kydde companye clenlyche arrayede ;
In the frout of þe fyrthe, as þe waye forthis,
ffyfty thosande of folke was fellide at ones !

1852 Thare was at þe assemblé certayne knyghtez,
Sore wondede sone appone sere halfes ;
The sekereste Sarzanez that to þat sorte lengede,
Be-hynde the sadylles ware sette sex fotte large ;

1856 They scherde in the schiltrone scheldyde knyghtez,
Schalkes they schotte thrughe schrenkande maylez,
Thurgh the brenys browdene breste they thirllede,
Brasers burnyste briste in sondyre ;

1860 Blasons blode and blankes they hewene,
With brandez of browne stele brankkand stede !
The Bretones brothely brittenez so many,
The bente and þe brode felde alle one blode rynnys !

1864 Be thane *syr* Cayous þe kene a capitayne has wonnene,
Sir Clegis clynges in, and clekes anoþer ;
The capitayne of Cordewa, undire þe kynge selfene,
That was keye of þe kythe of alle þat coste ryche,

1868 Utolfe and Ewandre, Joneke had nommene,
With þe erle of Affryke and oþer grette lordes.
The kyngε of Surry the kene to *syr* Cador es ȝeldene,
The Synechalle of Sotere to Segramoure hym selfene.

1872 When þe chevalrye saw theire cheftanes were nommene,
To a cheefe foreste they chesene theire wayes,
And felede theme so feynte, they falle in þe greves,
In the ferynne of þe fyrthe, fore ferde of oure pople.

1876 Thare myght mene see the ryche ryde in the schawes,
To rype up the Romayne ruydlyche wondyde !
Schowttes aftyre mene, harageous knyghtez,
Be hunndrethez they hewede dounε be þe holte eynys !

The King of Syria, full of grief, assembles his Saracens for vengeance.

Sir Cador and his men slay fifty thousand of them at once.

Certain knights are wounded by Saracens riding behind others.

The fight rages furiously.

The field runs blood.

Sir Clegis takes prisoner the Captain of Cordova.

Sir Cador takes the King of Syria.

The Romans fly into the forest.

Arthur's men slay many of them there.

1880 Thus oure chevalrous mene chasez þe pople ;
 To a castelle they eschewede a fewe þat eschappede.
 Thane relyez þe renkez of þe rounde table,
 ffor to ryotte þe wode, þer þe duke restez ;

A few escape to a castle.

Arthur's knights seek for their companions who had been slain. Sir Cador bids them carry them to the King.

He goes to Paris with the prisoners, and quickly returns to Arthur.

Then he tells him of the case that had befallen.

They had fought and slain many.

Divers of their best knights were taken prisoners,

the Senator Barouns, the King of Syria, the Seneschall of Suters.

But of Arthur's knights fourteen were slain.

Sir Beryl was killed at the first

1884 Ransakes the ryndez alle, raughte up theire feres,
 That in þe fightyng be-fore fay ware by-levyde.
 Sir Cador garte chare theym, and covere theme faire,
 Kariede theme to the kynge with his beste knyghtez ;

1888 And passez un-to Paresche with prisoners hym-selfene,
 Betoke theyme the proveste, pryncez and oþer ;
 Tase a sope in the toure, and taryez no langere,
 Bot tournes tytte to þe kynge, and hym wyth tunge telles.

1892 "Syr," sais *syr* Cador, "a caas es be-fallene ;
 We hafe cownterede to day, in ȝone coste ryche.
 With kyngez and kayseres, krouelle and noble,
 And knyghtes and kene men clenlych arayede !

1896 Thay hade at ȝone foreste forsette us þe wayes,
 At the furthe in þe fyrthe, with ferse mene of armes ;
 Thare faughtte we in faythe, and foynede with sperys,
 One felde with thy foo mene, and fellyd theme on lyfe.

1900 The kyng of Lebe es laide, and in þe felde levyde,
 And manye of his lege mene þat þere to hym langede !
 Oþer lordez are laughte of uncouthe ledes ;
 We hafe lede them at lenge, to lyf whilles þe lykez.

1904 Sir Uttere and *syr* Ewaynedyre, theis honourable knyghtez,
 Be an awntere¹ of armes Joneke has nommene,
 With erlez of þe Oryentte, and austere knyghtez,
 Of awncestrye þe beste mene þat to þe oste langede ;

1908 The senatour Barouns es kaughte with a knyghtte,
 The capitayne of Cornette, that crewelle es haldene,
 The syneschalle of Suters unsaughte wyth þes oþer,
 The kynge of Surry hym-selfene, and Sarazenes.

1912 Bot fay of ours in þe felde a fourtene knyghtez,
 B I wille noghte feyne ne forbere, but faythfully tellene,
 Sir Berelle es one, a banerette noble,

¹ Written in MS. *a nawntere*.

Was killyde at *þe* fyrste come with a kynge ryche ; beginning of the
 1916 Sir Alidoyke of Towelle, with his tende knyghtez, fray.

Emange *þe* Turkys was tynte, and in tyme fondene ;

Gude sir Mawrelle of Mauncez, and Mawrene his broþer,

Sir Meneduke of Mentoche, with mervailous knyghtez."

1920 **T**han the worthy kynge wrythes, and wepede with Then Arthur was
 his enghne, grieved,

Karpes to his cosyne *syr* Cador theis wordez,—

"Sir Cador, thi corage confundez us alle ! and speaks to his
 Cousin Sir Cador
 Kowardely thow castez owtte alle my beste knyghtez ! bitter words.

1924 To putte mene in perille, it es no prycce holdene,

Bot *þe* pertyes ware purvayede, and powere arayede ;

When they ware stade on a strenghe, *þou* sulde hafe with-stondene,

Bot ȝif thowe wolde alle my steryne stroye for *þe* nonys!"

1928 "Sir," sair *syr* Cador, "ȝe knowe wele ȝourselvene ; Sir Cador replies
 ȝe are kynge in this kythe, karpe whatte ȝow lykys ! with dignity.

Salle never upbrayde me, þat to *þi* burde langes,

That I sulde blyne for theire boste, thi byddyng to wyrche ;

1932 Whene any stirttez to stale, stuffe þame *þe* bettere,

Ore thei wille be stonayede, and stroyede in ȝone strayte
 londez.

I dide my delygens to daye, I doo me one lordez, He had only done
 And in daungere of dede fore dyverse knyghtez, his duty,

1936 I hafe no grace to *þi* gree, bot syche grett wordez ;

ȝif I heven my herte, my hape es no bettyre." . . . but is ill repaid
 ȝose *syr* Arthure ware angerde, he ansuers faire, by such hard
 words.

"Thow has doughtily donne, *syr* duke, with thi handez, Then Arthur re-
 1940 And has donne thy never with my dere knyghtez ; tracts.

ffor-thy thow arte demyde, with dukes and erlez, Heacknowledges
 ffor one of *þe* doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever ! Cador had done
 his devor.

Thare es none ischewe of us, on this erthe spongene ; He was one of
 1944 Thow arte apparent to be ayere, are one of thi childyre ; the bravest of the
 Thow arte my sister sone, for-sake sare I never !" brave,

Than gerte he in his awene tente a table be sette, and heir apparent
 And tryede in with tromppez travaillede biernez ; to the throne.

1948 Serfede them solempnely with selkouthe metez, Therefore he
 would never for-
 sake him.

Then he makes a
 noble feast in his
 own tent for the
 knights who had
 been engaged in
 the fight.

Swythe semly in syghte with sylverene dischees.

Whene the senatours harde saye þat it so happenede,

They saide to þe emperour, "thi seggez are suppryssede!"

1952 But the Senators of Rome tell the Emperor of the defeat of his men. He had been betrayed by those he trusted most.

1952 Sir Arthure, thyne enmy has owterayede þi lordez, That rode for þe rescowe of þone riche knyghtez ! Thow dosse bot tynnez þi tyme, and turmenttez þi pople ; Thow arte be-trayede of þi mene, that moste thow on traystede.

1956 Then the Emperor is very wroth.

1956 That schalle turne the to tene and torfere for ever."

Than the emperour irus was angerde at his herte, ffor oure valyant biernez siche prowesche had wonnene. With kynge and with kaysere to consayle they wende,

1960 He assembles a council of war.

1960 Soverayngez of Sarazenez, and senatours manye ; Thus he semblez fulle sone certayne lordez, And in the assemble thane he sais them theis wordez,—

" My herte sothely es sette, assente þif þowe lykes,

1964 He tells them his purpose to go into Saxony, and enter into Augusta, to riot and revel till the arrival of Sir Leo and the Lords of Lombardy.

1964 To seke into Sexone, with my sekyre knyghtez, To fyghte with my foo mene, if fortune me happene, þif I may fynde the freke with-in the foure halvez ; Or entire in-to Awguste awnters to seke,

1968 King Arthur, getting intelligence of this, withdraws his men secretly by the woods ; takes the shortest road into Saxony ;

1968 And byde with my balde mene with-in þe burghe ryche ; Riste us and revelle, and ryotte oure selfene, Lende þare in delytte in lordeckippez ynewe, To syr Leo be comene with alle his lele knyghtez,

1972 With lordez of Lumberdye, to lette hym the wayes."

Bot owre wyese kyng es warre to wayttene his renkes, And wyesly by þe woddez voydez his oste ; Gerte felschene his fyrez, flawmande fulle heghe,

1976 suddenly attacks the city with seven bands.

1976 Trussene fulle traystely, and treunt there aftyre. Sebene into Sessoyne, he soughte at the gayneste, And at the surs of þe sonne disseverez his knyghtez : fforsette theme the cite appone sere halfez,

1980 Sir Valiant makes a vow to vanquish the Viscount of Rome.

1980 So-daynly on iche halfe, with sevene grett stales. Ainely in the vale a vawewardre enbusches ; Sir Valyant of Vyleris, with valyant knyghtez, Be-fore þe kyngez visage made siche avowez,

1984 To venquyse by victorie the vescownte of Rome !
 ffor-thi the kynge chargez hym, what chaunce so be-falle,
 Cheftayne of the cheekke, with chevalrous knyghtez,
 And sythynē meles with mouthe, þat he moste traystez : The King gives him command of the vanguard ;

1988 Demenys the medylwarde menskfully hymē selfene,
 ffittes his fote-mene, alles hym faire thynkkes ;
 On frounte in the fore breste, the flour of his knyghtez,
 His archers on aythere halfe he ordayneðe þer-aftyre He arranges the archers on either flank,

1992 To schake in a sheltrone, to schotte whene þame lykez ;
 He arrayed in þe rerewardre fulle rialle knyghtez,
 With renkkes renownd of þe rounde table,
 Sir Raynalde, sir Richere, that rade was never, Places renowned knights for a rearguard.

1996 The riche Duke of Rowne wyt ryders ynewe ;
 Sir Cayous, sir Clegis, and clene mene of armes,
 The kyng castes to kepe be þaa clere strandes.

Sir Lott and syr Launcelott, þise lordly knyghtez,
 2000 Salle lenge on his lefte hande, wyt legyones ynewe,
 To meve in þe morne, while þif þe myste happynne ;
 Sir Cador of Cornewaile, and his kene knyghtez,
 To kepe at þe Karfuke, to close in ther oþere : Sir Lott and Sir Lancelot command a band on the left hand, which is to move in the mist of early morning.

2004 He plantez in siche placez pryncez and erlez,
 That no powere sulde passe be no prevé wayes.

Bot the emperor onone, with honourable knyghtez
 and erlez, enteres the vale, awnters to seke, Sir Cador and his men are to keep guard over the passes.

2008 And fyndez sir Arthure with hostez arayede ;
 And at his in-come, to ekkene his sorowe,
 Oure burlyche bolde kynge appone the bente howes,
 With his bataile one brede, and baners displayede. The Emperor and his knights quickly enter the vale in search of adventures.

2012 He hade þe cetē for-sett appone sere halfes,
 Bothe the clewez and þe clyfez with clene mene of armez !
 The mosse and þe marrasse, the mountez so hye, He finds Arthur's host drawn up in battle array,

With gret multytude of mene, to marre hym in þe wayes. and all the positions occupied.

2016 Whene syr Lucius sees, he sais to his lordez,
 " This traytour has truaunt¹ this tresone to wyrche !
 He has the cetē forsett appone sere halfez, Then Sir Lucius declares with

¹ Or treunt.

wrath that there
is no way else but
to fight, for fly
he may not.

He arrays his
rich Romans.
The Viscount is
in the van.

Hoists his stand-
ard, the golden
dragon enamelled
with eagles.

They drink and
make merry.

Sir Lucius ex-
horts them to
think on the
great renown of
Rome—how it
had conquered all
Christendom,

and all the land
of the Saracens,
from Jaffa to the
gates of Paradise.

Without doubt
they will quickly
reduce these
rebels.

Arthur calls upon
the Viscount of
Valence, and
threatens him
with vengeance.

The Viscount
boldly prepares
for the fray.

Alle *þe* clewez and the cleyffez with clene mene of armez !
Here es no waye i-wys, ne no wytt elles,
Bot feghte with oure foo-mene, for flee may we never !
Thane this ryche mane rathe arayes his byernez,
Rowlede his Romayne, and realle knyghtez ;
Buschez in the avawmewarde the vescoune of Rome,
ffro Viterbe to Venyse, theis valyante knyghtez :
Dresses up dredfully the dragone of golde,
With egles al-over, enamelede of sable ;
2028 Drawene dreghely the wyne, and drynkynē thereaftyre,
Dukkez and dusseperez, dubbede knyghtez,
ffor dauncesyngē of Duche-mene, and dynnyngē of pypez,
Alle dynned fore dyne that in *þe* dale hovede.
2032 And thane *syr* Lucius on lowde said lordlyche wordez,
A “ Thynke one the myche renownne of *þour* ryche
fadyrs ;
And the riatours of Rome, *þat* regnede with lordez ;
And the renkez over rane alle that regnede in erthe,
2036 Encrochede alle Cristyndome be craftes of armes ;
In everiche a viage the victorie was haldene ;
In sette alle *þe* Sarazenes within sevene wyntter,
The parte ffro the Porte Jaffe to Paradyse *ȝatez* !
2040 Thoghe a rewme be rebelle, we rekke it bot lyttile !
It es resone and righte the renke be restreynede !
Do dresse we tharefore, and byde we no langere,
ffore dredlesse with-owttyne dowtte, the daye schalle be
ourez ! ”
2044 Whene *þe*ise wordez was saide, the Walsche kyngē hym
selfene
Was warre of this wyderwyne, *þat* werrayede his knyghtez :
Brothely in the vale with voyce he ascryez, —
“ Viscounte of Valewnee, envyous of dedys,
2048 The vassalage of Viterbe to daye schalle be revengede !
Unvenquiste for *þis* place voyde schalle I never ! ”
Thane the vyscounte valiante, with a voyse noble,
Avoyedyde the avawewarde, enverounde his horse ;

2052 He drissede in a derfe schelde, endenttyd *with* sable,
 With a dragone engowschede, dredfull ϵ to schewe,
 Devorande a dolphyne with dolefull ϵ lates,
 In seyne that oure soveraygne sulde be distroyede,

2056 And alle done ϵ of dawez with dynttez of swreddez ;
 ffor thare es noghte bot dede thare the dragone es raissede !
 Thane the comlyche kyng ϵ castez in fewtyre,
 With a crewelle launce cowpez fulle evene

2060 Abowne þe spayre a spanne, emange þe schortte rybrys,
 That the splent and the spleene on the spere lengez !
 The blode sprente owtte and sprede as þe horse spryngez,
 And he sproulez fulle spakely, bot spekes he no more !

2064 And thus has *syr* Valyant haldene his avowez,
 And venqwyste þe viscownte, thate victor was haldene !
 Thane *syr* Ewayne *syr* Fytz Uriene fulle enkerlye rydez
 Onone to the emperor his egle to towche ;

2068 Thrughe his brode bataile he buskes be-lyfe,
 Braydez owt his brande *with* a blyth chere,
 Roverssede it redelye, and awaye rydys ;
 fferkez in with the fewle in his faire handez,

2072 And ffittez in freely one ffrounte *with* his feris.
 Now buskez *syr* Lanncelot, and braydez full ϵ evene
 To *syr* Lucius the lorde, and lothelye hym ϵ hyttiez ;
 Thurghe pawnce *and* platez he percede the maylez,

2076 That the prowde penselle in his pawnche lengez !
 The hede haylede owtt be-hynde ane halfe fote large,
 Thurghe hawberke and hanche, *with* þe harde wapyne !
 The stede and the steryne mane strykes to þe grownde,

2080 Strake downe a standerde, and to his stale wendez !
 " Me lykez wele," sais *syr* Loth, " ȝone lordez are dely-
 verede !

The lott lengez nowe on me, *with* leve of my lorde :
 To day sall ϵ my name be laide, and my life aftyre,

2084 Bot some leppe fro the lyfe, that one ȝone lawnde hovez !"
 Thane strekez the steryne, and streynys his brydylle,
 Strykez in-to the stowre on a stede ryche,

His device is a
 dragon devour-
 ing a dolphin.

Sir Valiant lays
 his lance in rest,
 and pierces him
 through the short
 ribs.

And thus did he
 redeem his word.

Sir Ewaine makes
 a bold attempt to
 reach the Em-
 peror.

Sir Lancelet slays
 the Lord Lucius.

Sir Lott rejoices
 that his turn is
 now come.

He slays a giant, Enjoynede with a geaunt, and jaggede hym thorowe !

2088 Jolyly this gentille for-justede anoþer,
Wroghte wayes fulle wyde, werryande knyghtez,
And wondes alle wathely, that in þe waye stondez !
ffyghtez with alle the ffrappe a furlange of waye,

and many war- 2092 ffelled fele appone felde with his faire wapene,
riors beside. Venqwiste and has the victorie of valyaunt knyghtez,
And alle enverounde the vale, and voyde whene hym
likede !

The British bow-
men discharge
their arrows. Thane bowmene of Bretayne brothely ther-aftyre
2096 Bekerde with bregaundez of ferre in tha laundez,
With flonez fletterede þay flitt fulle frescly þer frekez,
ffichene with fetheris thurghe þe fyne maylez :
Sithe flyttinge es foule that so the flesche derys,

The Dutchmen
throw darts. 2100 That flowe o ferrome in flawnkkes of stedez ;
Dartes the Duche-mene dalteme aȝaynes,
With derfe dynttez of dede, dagges thurghe scheldez ;
Qwarelles qwayntly swappez thorowe knyghtez

Many are slain
by the sharp
arrows. 2104 With iryne so wekyrly, that wynche they never.
So they schérenkene fore schotte of þe scharppe arowes,
That all the scheltrone schonte, and schoderide at ones !
Thane riche stedes rependez, and rasches one armes ;

But the giants
make a terrible
charge, 2108 The hale howndrethe one hye appone heyghe lygges,
Bot ȝitte þe hathelieste on hy, haythene and oþer ;
All hoursches over hede harmes to wyrke.
And alle theis geauntez be-fore, engenderide with fendez,

and with their
ironclubs destroy
many cavaliers
on white steeds. 2112 Joynez on sir Jenitalle, and gentille knyghtez,
With clubbez of clene stele clenkkede in helmes,
Graschede dounre crestez, and eraschede brayneze ;
Kyllede coursers and coverde stedes,

Nothing can
stand against
them until Ar-
thur comes. 2116 Choppode thurghe chevalers one chalke-whytte stedez.
Was never stele ne stede myghte stande them aȝaynez,
Bot stonays and strykez dounre, that in þe stale hovys.
Tille þe conquerour come with his kene knyghtez,

He despises
them, 2120 With crowelle contenaunce he cryede fulle lowde,—
“I wende no Bretoun walde bee basschede for so lyttile,

And fore bare-legyde boyes, þat one the bente hovys!"

2124 **H**e cleyks owtte Collbrande fulle clenlyche burneschte,
Graythes hym to Golapas, þat grevyde moste;
Kuttes hym evene by þe knees clenly in sondyre.

and plucking out
Colbrand, quickly
cuts the giant
Golapas in two
at the knees;

"Come downe," quod the kynge, "and karpe to thy ferys!"

Thowe arte to hye by þe halfe, I hete þe in trouthe!

2128 Thowe sall be handsomere hye, with þe helpe of my
Lorde!"

telling him "he
was too high by
half." Then he
strikes off his
head.

With þat stelene brande he strake ofe his hede.

Sterynly in þat stoure he strykes anoþer.

Thus he settez on sevene with his sekyre knyghtez :

He and his
knights slay
sixty giants.

2132 Whylles sixty ware servede soo, ne sessede they never!
And thus at the joyenye the geauntez are dystroyede,
And at þat journey for-justede with gentille lordez.

Than the Romaynes, and the renkkes of þe rounde table,
2136 Rewles them in arraye, rerewarde ande oþer,

The Romans rally
and make a fierce
resistance.

With wyghte wapynez of werre, thay wroghtene one
helmes,

Rittez with rennke stele fulle ryalle maylez;

Bot they fut them fayre, thes frekk byernez,

2140 ffewters in freely one fferaunte stedes,
ffoynes fulle felly with flyschande speris,
ffretene of orfrayes feste appone scheldez.

So fele fay es in fyghte appone þe felde levyde,

Many men are
slain. Rivers of
blood run into
the sea.

2144 That iche a furthe in the firthe of rede blode rynnys!
By that swyftely one swarthe þe swett es bylevede,
Swerdez swangene in two, swelstand knyghtez
Lyes wyde opyne welterande one walopande stedez;

2148 Wondes of wale mene werkande sydys,
ffacez fetteled unfaire in filterede lakes,
Alle craysed for-trodyne with trappede stedez,
The faireste fygured folde that fygured was ever,

2152 Alles ferre alles a furlange, a thosande at ones!
Be than the Romayne ware rebuykyde a lyttile,
With-drawes theyme drerely, and dreches no lengare;
Oure prynce with his powere persewes theyme aftyre,

The Romans be-
gin to retreat,
and Arthur
presses on them.

2156 Prekez one þe proudeste with his price knyghtez.
 Sir Kayous, sir Clegis, with clene mene of armez,
 Encounters theme at þe clyffe with clene mene of armez ;
 ffyghttes faste in þe fyrth, frythes no wapene,
 Sir Cayous and his men slay five hundred.

2160 ffelled at þe firste come fyfe hundrethe at ones !
 And when they fande theym foresett with oure fers
 knyghtez,
 ffewe mene agayne fele, mot fyche theme bettyre ;
 ffeghtez with alle þe frappe, foynes with speres,

2164 And faughte with the frekkest þat to Fraunce langez.
 He kills a king,

Bot sir Kayous þe kene castis in fewtyre,
 Chasez one a coursere, and to a kynge rydys ;
 With a launce of Lettowe he thirllez his sydez,

2168 That the lyver and þe lunggez on þe launce lengez.
 The schafte scodyrde and schott in the schire byerne,
 And soughte thorowowte þe schelde, and in þe schalke
 rystez.

but is sorely wounded by a coward knight from behind.

2172 Bot Kayous at the income was kepyd un-fayre
 With a cowarde knyghte of þe kythe ryche ;
 At the turnyng that tyme the traytours hym hitte
 In thorowe the felettes, and in þe flawnke aftyre,
 That the boustous launce þe bewelles attamede,

2176 þat braste at þe brawlyng, and brake in þe myddys.
 Sir Kayous knewe wele, be þat kyde wounde,
 That he was dede of þe dynte, and done owte of lyfe.
 He feels that he has received a mortal wound, but strikes down the coward.

2180 Than he raykes one arraye and one rawe rydez,
 One this ryalle his dede to revenge ;
 “Kepe the, cowarde,” and calles hym sone,
 Cleves hym wyth his clere brande clenliche in sondire !

“Hadde thou wele delte thy dynt with thi handes,

2184 I hade forgeffene þe my dede, be Crist now of hewyne !”
 He makes his way to Arthur, and tellshim that he is dying.

He weyndes to þe wyese kynge, and wynly hym gretes,
 “I am wathely woundide, waresche mone I never !

Wirke nowe thi wirchipe, as þe worlde askes,

2188 And bryng me to beryelle, byd I no more !
 He bids him greet for him the

Grete wele my ladye þe qwene, zife þe werlde happyne,

And alle þe burliche birdes þat to hir boure lengez ; Queen, the nobles of the court, and his wife.

And my worthily weife, þat wretlide me never,

2192 Bid hire fore hir wyrchipe wirke for my saulle !”

The kyngez confessour come, with Criste in his handes, Then comes the King’s confessor with the holy wafer.

ffor to comforthe the knyghte, kende hym þe wordes ;

The knyghte coueride on his knees with a kaunt herte,

2196 And caughte his Creatoure þat comfurthes us alle !

Thane remmes þe riche kynge fore rewthe at his herte, Then Arthur, full of grief, rushes into the fray to avenge him.

Rydes in-to rowte his dede to revenge ;

Presede in-to þe plumpe, and with a prynce metes,

2200 That was ayere of Egipt in thos este marches ;

Cleves hym with Collbrande clenlyche in sondyre !

He broches evene thorowe þe byerne, and þe sadille

bristes,

And at þe bake of þe blonke þe bewelles entamede !

2204 Manly in his malycoly he metes anōþer,

The medille of þat myghtty, þat hym myche grevede ;

He merkes thurgh the maylez the myddes in sondyre,

That the myddys of þe mane on þe mounte fallez,

2208 þe toþer halfe of þe haunche on þe horse levyde.

Of þat hurte, alls I hope, heles he never !

He schotte thorowe þe schiltrouns with his scharpe wapene,

Schalkez he schrede thurgh, and schrenkede maylez ;

2212 Baneres he bare downne, bryttenede scheldes,

Brothely with browne stele his brethe he þare wrekes :

Wrothely he wryththis by wyghtnesse of strenghe,

Woundes þese whydyrewyns, werrayede knyghttes,

2216 Threppede thorowe þe thykkys thryttene sythis,

Thryngenez throlly in the thrange, and chis evene aftyre !

Thanesir Gawayne the gude, with wyrchipfulle knyghtez,

Wendez in the avawarde be tha wodde hemmys ;

2220 Was warre of *syr* Lucius, one launde there he hovys,

With lordez and ligge mene, that to hym-selfe lengede.

Thane the emperour enkerly askes hym sonne,

“ What wille thow, Gawayne, wyrke with thi wapyne ?

2224 I watte be thi waveryng, thow willnez aftyre sorowe ;

He cleaves an Egyptian prince asunder.

Another he chops in half.

He cuts his way through the battle.

Sir Gawayne attacks the Emperor Lucius.

I salē be wrokyne on thi wrethe, for alle thi grete
wordez ?”

But Lucius with
his long sword
wounds Sir
Lionel,

He laughte owtte a lange swerde, and luyschede one ffaste,
And *syr Lyonelle* in the launde lordely hym strykes,

2228 Hittes hym on *þe* hede, þat *þe* helme bristis ;
Hurttes his herne-pane an haunde-brede large !
Thus he layes one *þe* lumppe, and lordlye þeme served,
Wondide worthily wirchipfull kuyghtez !

and makes the
blood flow from
Sir Florent.

2232 ffightez with Florent that beste es of swerde,
Tille *þe* fomande blode tille his fyste rynnes !
Thane *þe* Romayns relevyde, þat are ware rebuykkyde,
And alle to-rattys oure mene with theire riſte horsses ;

The Romans, ex-
cited by his
bravery, get the
better of Arthur's
men.

2236 ffore they see þaire cheftayne be chauffede so sore,
They chasse and choppe dounre oure chevalrous knyghttes !
Sir Bedwere was borne thurghe, and his breste thyrllede,
With a burlyche braunde, brode at *þe* hiltes ;

Sir Bedwere is
slain.

2240 The ryalle raunke stole to his herte rynns,
And he rusches to *þe* erthe, rewthe es the more !

Then Arthur
comes to the
rescue.

Then *þe* conquerour tuke kepe, and come with his
strenghes

To reschewe *þe* ryche mene of *þe* rounde table,

2244 To owttraye *þe* emperour, zif auntire it schewe,
Ewyne to *þe* egle, and Arthure askryes.

The Emperor
strikes Arthur on
the visor, and
wounds his face.

The emperour thane egerly at Arthure he strykez,
Awkwarde on *þe* umbrere, and egerly hym hittez !

Arthur gives him
a buffet that cuts
through his head
and breast.

2248 The nakyde swerde at *þe* nese noyes hym sare,
The blode of bolde kynge over *þe* breste rynns,
Beblede at *þe* brode schelde and *þe* bryghte mayles !
Oure bolde kynge bowes *þe* blonke be *þe* bryghte brydylle,

Sir Lucius dies,
and the Romans
fly.

2252 With his burlyche brande a buffete hym reches,
Thourghe *þe* brene and *þe* breste with his bryghte wapyne,
O-slante dounre fro *þe* slot he slyttes at ones !

2256 Thus endys *þe* emperour of Arthure hondes,
And all his austeryne oste þare-of ware affrayede !
Now they ferke to *þe* fyrthe, a fewe þat are levede,
ffor ferdnesse of oure folke, by *þe* fresche strandez !

The floure of oure ferse men^e one fferant stedez
 2260 ffolowes frekly on þe frekes, thatte ffrayede was never. Arthur's men
 pursue.

Thane þe kyde conquerour cryes fulle lowde,—
 "Cosyne of Cornewaile, take kepe to þi-selfene,
 That no captayne be kepyde for none silver,
 2264 Or *syr* Kayous dede be cruelly vengede!" The King bids
 them give no quarter.

"Nay," sais *syr* Cador, "so me Criste helpe!
 Thare ne es kaysere ne kynge, þat undire Criste rygnnes,
 þat I ne schall^e kille colde dede be crafte of my handez!" Sir Cador de-
 clares that he
 will spare neither
 king nor kaisar.

2268 Thare myghte men^e see chiftaynes, on chalke whitte stedez,
 Choppe doun^e in the chaas chevalrye noble;
 Romaynes þe rycheсте and ryalle kynge,
 Braste with ranke stele theire rybrys in sondyre! A fearful carnage
 follows.

2272 Grayves fore-brustene thurgh burneste helmes,
 With brandez for-brittenede one brede in þe laundez;
 They hewede doun^e haythene men^e with hiltede swerdez, Heathen men are
 slain by hun-
 dredz.

Be hole hundrethez on hye, by þe holte eynyes!

2276 Thare myghte no silver theym save, ne socoure theire
 lyves,
 Sowdane ne Sarazene,—ne senatour of Rome!
 Thane relevis þe renkes of the rounde table
 Be þe riche revare, that rynnys so faire;

2280 Lugegez thaym lulfyte by þa lyghte strandez,
 Alle on lawe in þe lawnde, that lordlyche byernes:
 They kaire to þe karyage, and tuke whate them likes,
 Kamelles and sekadresses, and cofirs fulle riche,
 Arthur's men
 plunder the rich
 camp of the Ro-
 mans.

2284 Hekes and hakkenays, and horses of armes,
 Howsyng^e and herbergage of heythene kyngez;
 They drewe owt of dromondaries dyverse lordes,
 Moyllez mylke whitte, and mervaillous bestez,
 2288 Elfaydes, and Arrabys, and olyfauntez noble,
 þer are of þe Oryent, with honourable kyngez.

Horses, camels,
 dromedaries,
 milk-white
 mules, elephants,
 and many mar-
 vellous beasts are
 captured.

Bot *syr* Arthure onone ayeres þer-aftyre
 Ewyne to the Emperour, with honourable kyngis;
 2292 Laughte hym upe fulle lovelyly with lordliche knyghtez,
 And ledde hym^e to þe layere, thare the kyng lygges.

Thane harawdez heghely, at heste of the lordes,
Hunttes upe the haythemene, that on heghte lygges,

The bodies of the
Emperor and
chief men of
Rome are em-
balmed and
wrapped in lead,

2296 The Sowdane of Surry, and certayne kynges,
Sexty of þe cheefe senatours of Rome.
Thane they bussches and bawmede þaire honourliche
kynges,

enclosed in
chests, and sent
to Rome with
their banners
displayed over
them.

2300 Sewed theme in sendelle sexti faulde aftire,
Lappede them in lede, lesse that they schulde
Chawnge or chawffe, ȝif þay myghte escheffe ;
Closed in kystys clene un-to Rome,

With theire baners abowne, theire bagis there-undyre,
2304 In whate countre þay kaire that knyghttes myghte knawe
Iche kynge be his colours, in kyth whare lengede.

Onone onē the secounde daye, sone by þe morne,
Twa senatours ther come, and certayne knyghtez,

2308 Hodles fro þe hethe, over þe holte eynes,
Barefote over þe bente, with brondes so ryche,
Bowes to þe bolde kynge, and biddis hym þe hiltes,
Whethire he wille hang theym or hedde, or halde theyme
on lyfe :

2312 Knelyde be-fore þe conquerour in kyrtilles allone ;
With carefull contenaunce þay karpide þese wordes,—
“Twa senatours we are, thi subgettez of Rome,
That has savede oure lyfe by þeise salte strandys ;

2316 Hyd us in þe heghe wode, thurghe þe helpyng of Criste !
Beseikes the of socoure, as soveraygne and lorde !
Grante us lyffe and lyme with liberalle herte,
ffor his luffe that the lente this lordchipe in erthe !”

The King grants
them their lives
on condition of
their carrying a
message for him
to Rome.

2320 “I graunte,” quod gude kyng, “thurghe grace of my-
selfene,
I giffe ȝowe lyffe and lyme, and leve for to passe,
So ȝe doo my message menskefully at Rome,
That ilke charge þat I ȝow ȝiffe here be-fore my cheefe
knyghtez.”

2324 “ȝis,” sais the senatours, “that sallē we ensure,
Sekerly be oure trowhes thi sayenges to fullfille ;

We sallē lett for no lede þat lyffes in erthe,
ffore pape ne for potestate, ne prynce so noble,
2328 That ne sallē lelely in lande thi letteres pronounce,
ffor duke ne fore dussepere, to dye in þe payne !”

Thanē the banerettez of Bretayne broghte þeme to tentes;
There barbours ware bownne, with basyns one lofte,
2332 With warme watire i-wys they wette theme fulle sone ;
They schovene this schalkes scharpely ther-aftyre,
To rekkene theis Romaynes recreaunt and ȝoldene ;
ffor-thy schove they theme to schewe, for skomfitte of
Rome.

2336 They coupylde þe kystys on kamelles be-lyve,
On asses and arrabyes, theis honourable kynge ;
The emperoure for honoure, alle by hym one,
Evenē appone ane olyfaunte, hys egle owtt overe ;
2340 Be-kende theme the captifis the kynge dide hym-selfene,
And alle byfore his kene mene karpede thees wordes,—

Here are the kystis,” quod the kyng, “ kaire over
þe mowntez ;
Mette fulle monee þat ȝe have mckyllē ȝernede,
2344 The taxe and þe trebutte of tene schore wyntteres,
That was tenefully tynte in tyme of oure elders :
Saye to the senatoure, þe cetē þat ȝemes,
That I sende hym ȝe somme, assaye how hym likes !

2348 Bott byde theme nevere be so bolde, whylls my blode
regnes,
Efte for to brawllee þeme for my brode landez,
Ne to aske trybut ne taxe be nakynē tytle,
Bot syche tresoure as this, whilles my tyme lastez.”

2352 Nowe they raike to Rome the redyeste wayes,
Knylls in the capatoylle, and comowns assembles,
Soverayngez and senatours, the cetē þat ȝemes ;
Be-kende theme the caryage, kystis and oþer,

2356 Alls þe conquerour comaunde with cruelle wordes.
“ We hafe trystily trayvellede þis tributte to feche,
The taxe and þe trewage of fowre score wynteris,

The British lords
bring barbers and
basons and baths
for them, in order
to prove their
submission.

They fastened the
coffins two and
two on camels.

The Emperor's
body, for honour,
was by itself on
an elephant.

Arthur charges
them to say
that they have
brought the ar-
rears of tribute
due from him to
Rome.

This is the only
tribute they will
ever get from
him.

They hasten to
Rome and sum-
mon the people
to the Capitol.

Perform Arthur's
message as he
directed.

They have
brought the tax
dues from Eng-
land and Ireland,
and all the west.

They declare that
they have suffer-
ed defeat and
great loss,

and bid the Ro-
mans beware.

This great battle
between Arthur
and the Romans
was fought in the
calends of May.

It was a blow
from which the
Romans could
not recover.

After the defeat
Arthur buries his
knights.

Sir Bedwere at
Bayonne ;
Sir Cayous at
Camelot ;

In Burgundy,
Berade, and
Baldwin, and
Bedwar ;
Sir Cador at
Camelot.
In the August
after Arthur en-
ters into Ger-
many,

2360 Of Iglande, of Irelande and alle þir owtt illes,
That Arthure in the occidente occupyes att ones :
He byddis ȝow nevere be so bolde, whills his blode regnes
To brawle ȝowe fore Bretayne ne his brode landes,
Ne aske hymē trebute ne taxe be nonkyns title,

2364 Bot syche tresoure as this, whills his tyme lastis.
We haffe foughttene in ffrance, and us es foule happenede,
And alle oure myche faire folke faye are by-levede !
Eschappide there ne chevallrye, ne cheftaynes noþer,

2368 Bott choppede downne in the chasse, syche chawnce es
be-fallenē !
We rede ȝe store ȝowe of stone, and stuffene ȝour walles :
ȝow wakkens wandrethe and werre ; be-ware, ȝif ȝow
lykes !"

2372 In the kalendez of Maye this caas es be-fallenē :
I The roy ryalle renownde, with his rownde table,
One the coste of Constantyne by þe clere strandez,
Has þe Romaynes ryche rebuykede for ever !
Whene he hade foughttene in Fraunce, and the felde
wonnene,

2376 And fersely his foomene fellde owtte of lyfe,
He bydes for þe beryenge of his bolde knygitez, .
That in batelle with brandez ware broughte owtte of lyfe.
He beryes at Bayone *syr* Bedwere þe ryche ;

2380 The cors of Kayone þe kene at Came es belevefede,
Koveride with a crystalle clenly alle over ;
His fadyre conqueride þat kyth knyghtly with hondes :
Seyne in Burgoyne he bade to bery mo knygitez,

2384 Sir Berade and Bawdwyne, sir Bedwar þe ryche,
And *syr* Cador at Came, as his kynde askes.
Thane *syr* Arthure onone, in þe Auguste. þer-afstyre,
Enteres to Almayne wyth ostez arrayed ;

2388 Lengez at Lusscheburghe, to lechene hys knyghtez,
With his lele ligge-men^e, as lorde in his awen^e:
And one *Chrisopfre* daye a concelle he haldez,
Withe kynges and kaysers, clerkkes and oþer,
2392 Comandez them kenely to caste alle þeire wittys,
How he may *conquere* by crafe the kythe þat he claymes.
Bot the conquerour kene, curtais and noble,
Karpes in the concelle theys knyghtly wordcz,—
2396 “Here es a knyghte in theis klevys, enclesside with hilles,
That I have cowayte to knawe, be-cause of his wordez,
That es Lorayne þe lele, I kepe noghte to layne;
The lordchipe es lovely, as ledes me telles:
2400 I wille that Ducherye devyse, and dele as me lykes,
And seyn^e dresse wyth þe duke, if destyny suffre:
The renke rebelle has bene un-to my rownde table,
Redy aye with Romaynes, and ryotte my landes!
2404 We sall rekkene fulle rathe, if resone so happen^e,
Who has ryghte to þat rente, by ryche Gode of hevene!
Thane wille I by Lombardye lykande to schawe,
Sett lawe in þe lande, þat laste sall^e ever.
2408 The tyrauntez of Terkayne tempeste a littylle,
Talke with þe temperalle, whilles my tyme lastez;
I gyffe my protteccione to alle þe pope landez,
My ryche penselle of pes my pople to schewe:
2412 It es a foly to offendre oure fadyr undire Gode,
Owþer Peter or Paule, þa postles of Rome.
Iff we spare the spirituuelle, we spedre bot thebettire;
Whilles we have for to speke, spille sall^e it never!”¹
2416 **N**ow they spedre at þe spurres, with-owtyn^e speche
more,
To þe Marche of Meyes, theis manliche knyghtez,
That es Lorrayne alofede, as London^e es here;
Pety of þat seynzowre, that soveraynge es holdene.
2420 The kyng ferkes furthe on a faire stede,

and encamps at Luxemburg.

He holds a coun-cil on Christmas-day to devise how he may conquer all the territory that he claims.

He makes a speech in the council, saying that he much de-sires the posses-sions of the Duke of Lorraine,

who has been long a rank rebel to his Round Table.

He will soon show him who is the rightful owner of those lands!

Afterwards he will go to Lombardy and then visit the tyrants of Turkey,

but he will give protection to all the lands of the Pope, for it is folly to offend our Father under God.

If we spare the goods of the spirituality we shall speed the better.

Arthur straight-way leads his knights to lay siege to Metz.

¹ This passage may be taken as tolerably conclusive evidence that the poem was composed by an ecclesiastic.

They seek a place
to fix the en-
gines.

The citizens
shoot at them
with arrows and
bolts.

The king, with-
out his shield,
remains close to
the walls within
range of the
arrows.

Sir Ferrere re-
monstrates with
him for exposing
himself to such
danger.

Arthur scorns
him, and tells
him

that he would be
afraid of a fly
that lighted on
him.

As for him, he
fears not such
poor creatures as
these.

Never knave will
be allowed to kill
a crowned king.

Then come the
gallant troops of
Arthur.

First the light
forayers on nim-
ble steeds;

then the renoun-
ed champions of
the Round Table;

With ferreraunde ferawnte, and *oþer* foure knyghtez;
Abowte the cete þa sevene, thay soughte at þe nextte,
To seke them a sekyre place to sett with the engeynes;

2424 Thane they beneyde in burgh bowes of vyse,
Bekyrs at þe bolde kyng^e with boustouse lates,
All-blawsters at Arthure egerly schottes,
ffor to hurte hym^e or his horse with þat hard wapene:

2428 The kynge schonte for no schotte, ne no schelde askys,
Bot schewes hym scharpely in his schene wedys;
Lenges alle at laysere, and lokes one the wallys,
Whare þey ware laweste the ledes to assaille.

2432 "Sir," said *syr* fferere, "a ffoly thowe wirkkes,
Thus nakede in thy noblaye to neghe to þe walles,
Sengely in thy surcotte, this ceté to reche,
And schewe þe with-in, there to schende us alle.

2436 Hye us hastylye heynne, or we mone fulle happene,
ffor hitt they the or thy horse, it harmes for ever!"
"Ife thowe be ferde," *quod* the kyng, "I rede thow
ryde uttere,

Lesse þat þey rywe the with their rownd wapyne!
2440 Thow arte bot a fawntkyne, ne ferly me thynkkys!
þou wille be flayede for a flye þat one thy flesche lyghttes!
I ame nothyng^e agasto, so me Gode helpe!
þof siche gadlynges be grevede, it greves me bot lyttile!
2444 Thay wyne no wirchipe of me, bot wastys theire takle!
They sall^e wante or I weende, I wagene myne hevede!
Salle never harlotte have happe, thorowe helpe of my
Lorde,

To kylle a crownde kynge with krysome enoynttede!"
2448 Thane come þe herbarjours, harageous knyghtez,
The hale batelles one hye harrawnte ther-aftyre;
And oure forreours ferse, appone fele halves,
Come flyeande be-fore one ferawnt stedes;
2452 fferkande in arraye theire ryalle knyghtez,
The renkez renownde of þe rownnd table:
Alle þe frekke mone of Fraunce folowede thare aftyre,

ffaire fittyde one frownte, and one the felde hovys.

2456 Thane the schalkes scharpelye scheftys theire horsez,
To schewene them semly in theire scheene wedes ;
Buskes in batayle with baners displayede,
With brode scheldes embrassedede, and burlyche helmys,

2460 With pennons and penselles of ylke prynce armes,
Appayrellde with perrye and pretious stones :
The lawnces with loraynes, and lemande scheldes,
Lyghtenande as þe levenyng, and lemand al over.

2464 **T**hanе the price mene prekes, and proves þeire horsez, The chief men exhibit the speed of their horses.
Satilles to þe ceté, appone sere halves ;
Enserches the subbarbes sadly thare-aftyre,
Discoveris of schotte-mene, and skyrmys a lyttile ;

2468 Skayres þaire skotefers, and theire skowtte waches,
Brittenes theire barrers with theire bryghte wapyns ;
Bett downe a barbycane, and þe brygge wynnys,
Ne hade the garnysone bene gude at þe grete ȝates,

2472 Thay hade wonne that wone be theire awene strenghe ! But the garrison at the great gates checks them.

Thane with-drawes oure mene, and drisses them bettyre,
ffor dred of þe drawe-brigge dasschede in sondre ;
Hyes to þe harbergage, thare the kynge hovys

2476 With his battelle one heghe, horsyde on stedys ;
Thane was þe prynce purvayede, and þeire places nomene,
Pyghte pavillyons of palle, and plattes in seegge.

Thane lenge they lordly, as þeme leefe thoghte,

2480 Waches in ylke warde, as to þe werre falles,
Settes up sodaynly certayne engynes ;
One Sonondaye be þe soone has a fleche ȝoldene.

The kynge calles one Florente, þat flour was of Arthur's men withdraw to where the king was waiting.
knyghtez, —

2484 "The Fraunce-mene enfeblesches, ne farly me thynkys ! They pitch their tents, and prepare for a regular siege.
They are un-fondyde folke in þa faire marches,
ffor them wantes þe flesche and fude that them lykes.

Here are fforestez faire appone fele halves,

2488 And thedyre feemene are fede with freliche bestes !
Thow sall foonde to þe felle, and forraye the mountes ;

Sir fforawnt and *syr* Florydas *salle* folowe thi brydylle ;
Us moste with some fresche mette refresche our pople,

2492 That are feedde in *þe* fyrthe with *þe* froyte of *þe* erthe.
Thare *salle* weende to *þis* viage sir Gawayne hym-selfene,
Wardayne fulle wyrchipfull, and so hym wele semes :
Sir Wecharde, *syr* Waltyre, theis wyrchipfull knyghtes,

Sir Gawaine him-
self, the wor-
shipful warden,
shall accompany
them,

and many other
knights of name.

2496 With alle wyseste mene of *þe* Weste marches :
Sir Clegis, *syr* Clarybalde, *syr* Clarymownde *þe* noble,
The capytayne oo wardyfe clenlyche arrayede.
Goo now, warne alle *þe* wache, Gawayne and oþer,

2500 And weendes furthe on *þour* waye withowtynne moo
wordes."

These fresh men
of arms start in
their journey
through woods
and over hills.

They fall upon a
field of grass
newly mown,

where they bait
their horses,

while the birds
sweetly sing.

Sir Gawaine goes
forth by himself
to seek adventures.

He sees a knight
well armed,

and a page carry-
ing his spear.

On his shield his
coat of arms was
displayed.

Now ferkes to *þe* fyrthe thees fresche mene of armes,
To *þe* felle so fewe, theis fresclyche byernes,

Thorowe hopes and hymlande hillys and oþer,
2504 Holtis and hare woddes with heslyne schawes,
Thorowe marasse and mosse and montes so heghe ;
And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
Mawene and un-made, maynoyrede bott lyttyle,
2508 In swathes swappene downe fulle of swete floures :
Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes *þe*ire horses,
To *þe* grygynge of *þe* daye, that byrdes gane syng ;
Whylls the surs of *þe* sonne, þat sonde es of Cryste,
2512 That solaces alle synfulle, þat syghte has in erthe.
Thane weendes owtt the wardayne, *syr* Gawayne hym-selfene,

Alles he þat weysse was and wyghte, wondyrs to seke ;
Thane was he warre of a wye wondyre wele armyde,
2516 Baytand one a wattire banke by *þe* wodde eynis,
Buskede in brenyes bryghte to be-halde,
Enbrassede a brode schelde on a blonke ryche,
With birenne ony borne, bot a boye one
2520 Hoves by hym on a blonke, and his spere holdes ;
He bare sessenande in golde thre grayhondes of sable,
With chapes a cheynes of chalke whytte sylver,
A charbocle in *þe* cheefe, chawngawnde of hewes,

2524 And a cheefe anterous, chalange who lykes.

Sir Gawayne glystes on the gome with a glade wille!

A grete spere fro his grome he grypes in hondes,
Gyrdes ewene overe the streme one a stede ryche

2528 To þat steryne in stour, one strenghe þare he hovys!

Egerly one Inglissee Arthure he askryes,

The toþer irouslye ansuers hyme sone

On a launde of Lorryne with a lowde stervene,

2532 That ledes myghte lystene þe lenghe of a myle!

“Whedyr prykkes thou, pilour, þat profers so large?

Here pykes thoue no praye, profire whene þe lykes!

Bot thou in þis perelle put of thebettire,

2536 Thow sall be my presonere, for alle thy prowde lates!”

“Sir,” sais *syr* Gawayne, “so me Gode helpe!

Siche glaverande gomes greves me bot lyttile!

Bot if thoue graythe thy gere, the wille grefe happene,

2540 Or thoue goo of þis greve, for alle thy grete wordes!”

Than *þeire* launces they lachene, thes lordlyche byernez,
Laggene with longe speres one lyarde stedes;

Cowpene at awntere be brastes of armes,

2544 Tille bothe *þe* crowelle speres broustene att ones!

Thorowe scheldys *þey* schotte, and scherde thorowe males,

Bothe schere thorowe schoulders a schaftmonde large!

Thus worthylye *þes* wyes wondede ere bothene;

2548 Or they wreke *þeme* of wrethe a-waye wille *þey* never!

Than they raughte in the reyne and a-gayne rydes,

Redely theis rathe mene rusches owtte swordez,

Hittes one hellmes fulle hertelyche dynttys,

2552 Hewes appone hawberkes with fulle harde wapyns!

ffulle stowtly *þey* stryke thire steryne knyghttes,

Stokes at *þe* stomake with stelyne poynttes,

ffeghtene and floresche withe flawmande swerde,

2556 Tille *þe* flawes of fyre flawmes one theire helmes.

Than *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and grythgide fulle sore;

With Galuthe his gude swerde grymlye he strykes!

Clefe *þe* knyghttes schelde clenliche in sondre!

Sir Gawayne beholds him with great joy, and goes across the stream towards him.

He shouts his cry, “Arthur of England.”

The other shouts “Lorraine.”

Then does the strange knight declare that Gawayne shall be his prisoner.

Sir Gawayne treats his great words with contempt.

Then they lay their spears in rest, and meet.

Both the spears strike fair, and wound the knights.

Then they rein in their horses and return to the fight with swords.

Fearful blows are exchanged.

Sir Gawayne waxes wroth, and strikes grimly with his sword Galuth.

He cleaves the knight's shield asunder, and lays open his side.

The knight strikes fiercely at Sir Gawaine.

He cuts through his armour and draws blood,

which flows over all his dress.

Then the knight jeers at him, and says the blood shall never be staunched.

Sir Gawaine despises his words,

but would know what can stop the bleeding.

The knight will tell him if Gawaine will allow him to have shrift and prepare himself for his end.

Gawaine readily grants this.

2560 Who lukes to *þe* lefte syde, whene his horse launches,
With *þe* lyghte of *þe* sonne men myghte see his lyvere !
Thane granes *þe* gome fore greefe of his wondys,
And gyrdis at *syr* Gawayne, as he by glentis ;

2564 And awkewarde egerly sore he hym smyttes ;
An alet enamelde he oches in sondire,
Bristes *þe* rerebrace with the bronde ryche,
Kerves of at *þe* coutere with *þe* clene egge,

2568 Anetis *þe* avawmbrace vrayllede with silver !
Thorowe a dowble vesture of velvett ryche,
With *þe* venomous swerde a vayne has he towchede !
That voydes so violently þat alle his witte changede !

2572 The vesere, the aventaile, his vesturis ryche,
With the valyant blode was verrede alle over !
Thane this tyrante tite turnes *þe* brydille,
Talkes un-tendirly, and sais, “ *þow* arte towchede !

2576 Us bus have a blode bande, or thi ble change,
ffor alle *þe* barbours of Bretayne salle noghte thy blode
stawnche !
ffor he þat es blemeste with *þis* brade brande, blyne
schalle he never.”

“ *þa*,” *quod* *syr* Gawayne, “ thow greves me bot lyttile !

2580 Thowe wenys to glopyne me with thy gret wordez !
Thow trowes with thy talkyng þat my harte talmes !
Thow betydes torfere or thowe hyene turne,
Bot thow telle me tytte, and tarye no lengere,

2584 What may staunce this blode þat thus faste rynnes.”
“ *ȝife* I say *þe* sothely, and sekire *þe* my trowthe,
No surggone in Salarne salle save *þe* bettyre ;
With-thy þat thowe suffre me, for sake of thy Cryste,

2588 To schewe schortly my schrifte, and schape for myne
ende.”

“ *ȝis*,” *quod* *syr* Gawayne, “ so me God helpe !
I gyfe *þe* grace and graunt, thofe *þou* hafe grefe servede !

2592 With-thy thowe say me sothe what thowe here sekes,
Thus sengilly and sulayne alle *þi*-selfe one ;

And whate laye thou leves one, layne noghte þe sothe,
And whate legyaunce, and whare þow arte lorde."

2596 "My name es *syr Priamus*; a prince es my fadyre,
Praysede in his pertyes with provede kynges ;

In Rome thare he regnes he es riche haldene ;

He has bene rebelle to Rome, and redene their landes,

2600 Werreyand weisely wyntters and þeres,

Be witt and be wyssdome, and be wyghte strenghe,

And be wyrchipfulle werre his awene has he wonne.

He es of Alexandire blode, *overlynge* of kynges,

2604 The uncle of his ayele, *syr Ector* of Troye ;

And here es the kynredene that I of come,

And Judas and Josue, þise gentille knyghtes :

I ame apparaunt his ayere, and eldeste of oþer ;

2608 Of Alexandere and Aufrike, and alle þa owte landes,

I am in possessione, and plenerly sessede.

In alle þe price cetees that to þe porte langes,

I sall hafe trewly the tresour and the londes,

2612 And bothe trebute and taxe whilles my tyme lastes ;

I was so hawtayne of herte, whilles I at home lengede,

I helde nane my hippe heghte undire hevene ryche ;

ffor-thy was I sente hedire with sevene score knyghtez,

2616 To asaye of this werre, be sente of my fadire ;

And I am for *Cyrus* witrye schamely supprisede,

And be awtire of armes owtrayede for ever !

Now hafe I taulde the þe kyne that I ofe come,

2620 Wille thou for knyghthede kene me thy name ?"

"Be Criste," *quod syr Gawayne*, "knyghte wys I never !

With þe kydde conquerour a knafe of his chambyre :

Has wroghte in his wardrobe wyntters and þeres,

2624 One his longe armour that hym beste lykid ;

I poyne alle his pavelyouns þat to hym-selfe pendes,

Dyghttes his dowblettez for dukes and erles,

Aketouns avenaunt for Arthure hym selfene,

2628 That he usede in werre alle this aughte wyntter !

He made me þomane at þole, and gafe me gret gyftes,

The stranger knight tells him that his name is Sir Priamus, son of a prince,

who rebelled against Rome, and gained a kingdom.

He is of the blood of Alexander and Hector of Troy ;

related also to Judas and Joshua ;

heir of Africa.

When at home he was so proud and overbearing,

that he was sent by his father to this war with a band of knights.

He desires to know Sir Gawayne's name.

Sir Gawayne answers deceitfully that he is only a knave of Arthur's chamber,

who had given him a horse and harness as a reward for service.

"If his knaves be such, what can his knights be?" exclaims Sir Priamus.
Alexander and Hector will be nothing to him.

Then Sir Gawaine tells him the truth.

He is Sir Gawaine, cousin to the Conqueror, the richest knight of all the Round Table.

Then Sir Priamus says this is better to him than any earthly possessions.

In recompense, he warns Gawaine that the Duke of Lorraine with his knights is lying in the wood near.

A mighty host well armed.

And c. pound and a horse, and harnayse fulle ryche ;
Gife I happe to my hele that hende for to serve,

2632 I be holpene in haste, I hette the for-sothe!"
"Giffe his knafes be syche, his knyghtez are noble !
There es no kynge undire Criste may kempe with hym one !
He wille be Alexander ayre, þat alle þe erthe lowttede,

2636 Abillere þane ever was *syr* Ector of Troye."
"Now fore the krisome þat þou kaghte that day þou was erystenede,
Whethire thowe be knyghte or knaffe, knawe now þe sothe :
My name es *syr* Gawayne, I graunt þe forsothe,
2640 Cosyne to the conquerour, he knewes it hymselfe ;
Kydd in his kalander a knyghte of his chambyre,
And rollede the richeste of alle þe rounde table !
I ame þe dussepere and duke he dubbede with his hondes,

2644 Deynttely on a daye be-fore his dere knyghtes ;
Gruche noghte, gude *syr*, þofe me this grace happene ;
It es þe gifte of Gode, the gree es hys awene!"
"Petire!" sais Priamus, "now payes me bettire
2648 Thane I of Provynce warre prynce, and of Paresche ryche !
ffore me ware lever prevely be prykkyd to þe harte,
Than ever any prikkere had siche a prysse wonnyne !
Bot here es herberde at handes, in ȝone huge holtes,

2652 Halle bataile one heyghe, take hede ȝif the lyke !
The duke of Lorryne the derfe, with his dere knyghtes,
The doughtyest of Dolfmede, and Duchemene many,
The lordes of Lombardye that leders are haldene,

2656 The garnysone of Godarde gaylyche arrayede,
The wyese of þe Westvale, wirchipfuller biernez,
Of Sessoyne and Surylande Sarazenes enewe ;
They are nowmerde fulle neghe, and namede in rollez

2660 Sexty thowsande and tene for-sothe of sekyre mene of
armezy ;
Bot ȝif thou hye fro þis hethe, it harmes us bothe,
And bot my hurtes be sone holpene, hole be I never !

Tak heede to þis hausemene, þat he no horne blawe,
 2664 Are thowe heyl in haste beese hewene al to peces ;
 ffor they are my retenuz to ryde whare I wylle,
 Es none redyare renkes regnande in erthe ;
 Be thow raghte with þat rowtt, thow rydes no forþer,
 2668 Ne thow bees never rawnsonede for reches in erthe !”

He bids him beware lest they should discover and destroy him.

Sir Gawayne wente or þe wathe come, whare hym beste lykede,

Sir Gawayne goes with the wounded knight to Arthur's men.

With this wortheliche wye, that wondyd was sore ;
 Merkes to þe mountayne there oure mene lenges,
 2672 Baytaynde theire blonkes þer on þe brode mede ;
 Lordes lenande lowe one lemande scheldes,
 With lowde laghttirs one lofte for lykyng of byrdez,
 Of larkez, of lynkwhyttiez, þat lufflyche songene,
 2676 And some was slechte one slepe with slaughte of þe pople,
 That sange in þe sesone in the schenne schawes,
 So lawe in þe lawndez so lykande notes.

They are reposing themselves in different ways,

Thane *syr* Whycher whas warre þaire wardayne was wondyde,

listening to the songs of the birds.

2680 And went to hym wepand, and wryngande his handes ;
 Sir Wychere, *syr* Walchere, theis weise mene of armes,
 Had wondyre of *syr* Gawayne, and wente hym agayns :
 Mett hym in the mydwaye, and mervaile theme toghte
 2684 How he maisterede þat mane, so myghty of strenghes !

and wonders how he could have conquered this mighty knight.

Be alle þe welthe of þe werlde, so woo was þeme never !
 “ffor alle our wirchippe i-wysse awaye es in erthe !”

“Greve þow noghte,” *quod* Gawayne, “for Godis luffe of hevene ;

Sir Gawayne makes light of his wounds.

2688 ffore this es bot gosesemere, and gyffene one erles ;
 þoffe my schouldire be schrede, and my schelde thyrllede,
 And the wielde of myne arme werkkes a littille,
 This prisonere *syr* Priamus, that has *perilous* wondes,
 2692 Sais þat he has salvez sallē softene us bothene.”

His prisoner, Sir Priamus, has salves that will heal them.

Thane stirttes to his sterape sterynfullē knyghtiez,
 And he lordely lyghttes and laghte of his brydille,
 And lete his burlyche blonke baite on þe flores ;

They assist him to dismount.

2696 Braydes of his bacenette and his ryche wedis,
 He bends from
 exhaustion and
 loss of blood.

2700 Avyssely of his horse hentis hym in armes ;
 Sir Priamus is
 lifted from his
 horse.

2704 And he levede hym one lange, or how hym beste lykede ;
 They find at his
 girdle a gold box
 filled with the
 flower of Para-
 dise.

2708 That myche froyt of fallez, þat feede schalle us alle ;
 With this the
 knights are
 healed.

2712 With clere watire a knyghte clensis theire wondes,
 Then wine and 2716 Bothe brede and brawne, and bredis full ryche ;
 provisions are
 brought to them.

2720 Callys to concelle, and of this case tellys :—
 The scouts bring
 news of the army
 encamped in the
 wood.

2724 Undir takande mene of þiese owte londes ;
 Sir Gawaine is for
 attacking them,

2728 ȝif we gettlesse goo home, the kyng wille be grevede,
 but refers to Sir
 Florent, the
 leader of the
 party.

2696 Bownnes to his brode schelde and bowes to þe erthe,
 In alle the bodye of that bolde es no blode leved !
 Than preses to syr Priamous precious knyghtes,

2700 His helme and his hawberke thay takene of aftyre,
 And hastily for his hurtte alle his herte chawngyd ;
 Thay laide hym downe in the lawndez, and laghte of
 his wedes,

2704 þat es fulle of þe flour of þe foure welle,
 þat flowes owte of Paradice whene þe flode ryses,

2708 That myche froyt of fallez, þat feede schalle us alle ;
 Be it frette on his flesche, þare synnes are entamede,
 The freke schalle be fische halle with-in fowre howres.
 They uncovere þat cors with fulle clene hondes ;

2712 With clere watire a knyghte clensis theire wondes,
 Keled theyme kyndly, and comforted þer hertes.
 And whene þe carffes ware clene, þay clede them aȝayne,
 Barelle ferrers they brochede, and broghte them the wyne,

2716 Bothe brede and brawne, and bredis full ryche ;
 Whene þay hade etene anone they armede after.
 Thane tha awntrende men as armes askryes,
 With a claryoune clere, thire knyghez to-gedyrc,

2720 Callys to concelle, and of this case tellys :—
 “ ȝondyr es a compayne of clene mene of armes,
 The keneste in contek þat undir Criste lenges ;
 In ȝone okene wode an oste are arrayede,

2724 Undir takande mene of þiese owte londes ;
 As sais us syr Priamous, so helpe seynt Peter ! ”
 “ Go, mene, quod Gawayne, “ and grape in ȝoure hertez,
 Who sall graythe to ȝone greve to ȝone gret lordes ;

2728 ȝif we gettlesse goo home, the kyng wille be grevede,
 And say we are gadlynges, agaste for a lyttile :
 We are with syr Florente, as to-daye falles,

That es floure of ffaunce, for he fleede never;

2732 He was chosene and chargegide in chambire of þe kynge,
Chiftayne of þis journee with chevalrye noble ;
Whethire he fyghte or he flee, we sall folowe aftyre,
ffore alle þe fere of þone folke forsake sall I never ! ”

2736 “ ffadyre,” sais *syr Florent*, “ fulle faire þe it telle !
Bot I ame bot a fawntkyne, unfraystede in armes ;
ȝif any foly be-falle, þe fawte sall be owrs,
And freindly o Fraunce be flemede for ever ! ”

2740 Woundes noghte ȝour wirchipe, my witte es bot symple ;
ȝe are owre wardayne i-wysse, wyrke as ȝowe lykes ;
ȝe are at the ferreste noghte passande fyve hundrethe,
And þat es fully to fewe to feghte with theme alle,

2744 ffore harlottez and hausemene sall helpe bott littille ;
They wille hye theyme hyene for alle þeire gret wordes !
I rede ȝe wyrke aftyre witte, as wyesse men of armes,
And warpes wylily a-waye, as wirchipulle knyghtes.”

2748 “ I grawnte,” *quod syr Gawayne*, “ so me Gode helpe !
Bot here are galyarde gomes þat of þe gre servis,
The kreuelleste knyghtes of þe kynges chambyre,
That kane carpe with the coppe knyghtly wordes ;

2752 We sall prove to daye who sall the prys wyne.”

N owe ferriours fers un-to þe fyrthe rydez,
And foungez a faire felde, and on fotte lyghttez ;
Prekes aftyre þe pray, as pryce mene of armes.

2756 fflorent and Floridas, with fyve score knyghttez,
ffolowede in þe foreste, and on þe way fowndys,
fflyngande a faste trott, and on þe folke dryffes.
Than felewes fast to our folke wele a fyve hundreth

2760 Of freke mene to þe fyrthe, appone fresche horses ;
One *syr Feraunt* be-fore, apone a fayre stede,
(Was fosterde in Famacoste, the fende was his fadyre)
He flenges to *syr Florent*, and prystly he kryes,—

2764 “ Why flees thou, falls knyghte ? þe fende hafe þi saule ! ” He calls scorn-
fully on Sir Flo-
rent,
Thane *syr fflorent* was fayne, and in fewter castys ;
One fawnelle of ffryselande to fferaunt he rydys,

Sir Florent ex-
presses his defer-
ence to Sir Ga-
waine, the warden
of the knights of
the Round Table,

and thinks their
numbers are too
few to fight.

He is for a care-
ful retreat.

Sir Gawaine
speaks with a
sneer of those
who only fight
with words.

Arthur’s men
advance to the
wood.

A band of 500 of
the enemy meet
them, headed by
Sir Feraunt.

And raghte in $\text{\textit{he}}$ reyne on $\text{\textit{he}}$ stede ryche,

2768 And rydes to-warde the rowte, restes he no lengere !
 who with his
 lance in rest
 pierces him
 through the face
 and brain.

His cousin vows
 vengeance for his
 death,

but Sir Floridas
 quickly disposes
 of him.

Sir Raynald, the
 renegade, proudly
 presses in;

but Sir Richer,
 of the Round
 Table, pierces him
 with a spear.

Sir Florent and
 his five score
 knights are sorely
 pressed.

The one side
 shout "Lo-

ffulle butt in $\text{\textit{he}}$ frounte he flysches hymne evene,
 And alle dysfegoures his face with his felle wapene !
 Thurghe his brygthe bacenette his brayne has he towchede,

2772 And brustene his neke-bone, þat all his breste stoppede !
 Thane his cosyne askryede, and cryede full $\text{\textit{e}}$ lowde,
 "Thowe has killede colde dede $\text{\textit{he}}$ kynge of alle knyghttes !
 He has bene fraistede on felde in fyftene rewmes ;

2776 He fonde never no freke myghte foghte with hym one !
 Thow schalle dye for his dede with my derfe wapene,
 And all $\text{\textit{he}}$ doughty for duele þat in zone dale hoves !"
 "ffy," sais *syr* fforidas, "thow fferyande wryche !"

2780 Thow wenes for to flay us, ffloke-mowthede schrewe !"
 Bot fforidas with a swerde, as he by glentts,
 Alle $\text{\textit{he}}$ flesche of $\text{\textit{he}}$ flanke he flappes in sondyre,
 That alle the filthe of $\text{\textit{he}}$ freke and fele of $\text{\textit{he}}$ guttes

2784 ffoloies his fole fotte, whene he furthe rydes !
 Than rydes a renke to reschewe þat byerne,
 That was Raynalde of $\text{\textit{he}}$ rodes, and rebelle to Criste,
 Pervertede with Paynymeys þat Cristene persewes ;

2788 Presses in proudly, as $\text{\textit{he}}$ praye wendes,
 ffore he hade in Prewsslande myche prycce wonnene ;
 ffor-thi in presence thare he profers so large !
 Bot thane a renke *syr* Richere of $\text{\textit{he}}$ rounde table,

2792 One a ryalle stede rydes hym aȝaynes ;
 Throwe a rounnde rede schelde he ruschede hym sone,
 That the rosselde spere to his herte rynnes !
 The renye relys abowte and rusches to $\text{\textit{he}}$ erthe,

2796 Roris fulle ruydlye, bot rade he no more !
 Now alle þat es fere and unfaye of $\text{\textit{he}}$ fyve hundred
 ffalles on *syr* fflorent, a ffyve score knyghttes ;
 Be-twix a plasche and a flode, appone a flate lawnde,

2800 Oure folke fongene theire felde, and fawghte them $\text{\textit{e}}$
 agaynes.
 Than was lowde appone lofte Lorryne askryede,

Whene ledys with longe speris lasschene to-gedyrs, raine," the other
And Arthure one oure syde, whene theyme oghte aylede. "Arthur."

2804 Than *syr* florent and Floridas in fewtyre þey caste,
ffruschene one alle þe ffrape, and biernes affrayede ;
ffellis fyve at þe frounte thare they fyrste enteride,
And, or they ferke forthire, fele of þese oþere !

Sir Florent and
Sir Floridas per-
form great deeds
of valour.

2808 Brenyes browddene they briste, brittenede scheldes,
Bettes and beres downe the best þat þeme byddes ;
Alle þat rewlyde in the rowte they rydene awaye,
So rewldly they rere theys ryalle knyghttes !

2812 When *syr* Priamous þat prince persayvede theire gamene, Sir Priamus be-
He hade peté in herte þat he ne durst profire ; seeches Gawaine
He wente to *syr* Gawayne, and sais hym þese wordes, — that he may help
"Thi price mene fore thi praye putt are alle undyre, Arthur's knights
against the Saracens.

2816 They are with Sarazenes over-sette mo þane sevene
hundreth

Of þe Sowdanes knyghtes owt of sere londes ;
Walde þow suffire me, *syr*, for sake of thi Criste,
With a soppe of thi mene suppowelle theym ones."

2820 "I grouche not," quod Gawayne, "þe gree es þaire awene !
They mone hafe gwerddouns fulle grett graunt of my
lorde !

Sir Gawaine de-
clares that they
have only just
enough to do to
please them.

Bot the freke mene of Fraunce fraiste them selfene,
ffrekis faughte noghte þeire fille this fyftene wyntter !

2824 I wille noghte stire with my stale half a stede lenghe,
Bot they be stedde with more stiffe thane one þone stede
hovys."

Than *syr* Gawayne was warre with-owttyne þe wode He sees the main
hemmes, body of the enemy
approaching,

Wyes of þe Westfale appone wyght horsez,

2828 Walopande wodely, as þe waye forthes,
With alle þe wapyns i-wys that to þe werre longez ;
The erle Antele the olde the avawmwarde he buskes,

Ayerande one ayther hande heghte thosande knyghtez ;

2832 He pelours and pavysers passede alle nombyre,
That ever any prynce lede purvayede in erthe !

headed by the
Earl Antele, who
leads 8,000
knights.

Than þe duke of Lorrayne dresesse thare aftyre,
With dowbille of þe Duche-mene, þat doughtty ware
holdene;

2836 Paynymes of Pruyslande, prekkers fulle noble,
Come prekkande be-fore with Priamous knyghtez.

The Earl is indignant that Arthur's knights should venture to resist so great a host.

Than saide the erle Antele to Algere his broþer,—
“ Me angers earnestly at Arthures knyghtez !

2840 Thus enkerly one an oste awnters þeme selfene ;
They wille be owttrayede anone, are undrone ryngē,
Thus folily one a felde to fyghte with us alle !
Bot thay be fesede in faye, ferly me thynkes !

2844 Walde they purposse take, and passe one theire wayes,
Prike home to theire prynce, and theire pray leve,
They myghte lenghen theire lyfe, and lossene bottlittille !
It wolde lyghte my herte, so helpe me oure Lorde !”

They had better retreat while they are able.

Sir Alger, his brother, says that though they are so few they are a match for an army.

2848 “ Sir,” sais *syrs* Algere, “ thay hafe littille usede
To be owttrayede with the oste ; me angers þe more !
The fayreste schalle be fulle feye, þat in oure floke ryddez,
Alls fewe as they bene, are they the felde leve !”

Sir Gawaine rejoices at having some work to do, and encourages his knights.

2852 **T**hanē gud Gawayne, gracious and noble,
Alle with glorious gle he gladdis his knyghtes ;
“ Glopypns noghte, gud mene, for gleterand schelles,
ȝofe ȝone gadlynges be gaye one ȝone gret horses !

2856 Banerettez of Bretayne, buskes up ȝour hertes !
Bees noghte baiste of ȝone boyes, ne of þaire bryghte wedis !
We sallē blenke theire boste for alle theire bolde profire !
Als bouxome as birde es in bede to hir lorde,

2860 ȝeffe we feghte to daye, þe felde schalle be owrs !
The fekillē faye sallē faile, and fallssede be distroyede !
ȝone folk is one ffrountere, unfraistede theymē semes ;
Thay make faythe and faye to þe fend selvene !

2864 We sallē in this viage victoures be holdene,
And avauntede with voycez of valyant biernez ;
Praysede with pryncez in presence of lordes,
And luffede with ladyes in dyverse londes !

Great shall be the rewards and joys of victory.

2868 Aughte never siche honoure none of oure elders,

Unwyne ne Absolone, ne none of theis oþer !
 Whene we are moste in destresse, Marie we mene,¹
 That es oure maisters seyne, þat he myche traistez ;
 2872 Melys of þat mylde qwene, that menskes us alle ;
 Who so meles of þat mayde, myskaries he never !”
 Be þese wordes ware saide, they ware noghte ferre behynde The enemy come
 Bot the lenghe of a launde, and Lorayne askryes ; upon them.

2876 Was never siche a justynge at journe in erthe,
 In the vale of Josephate, as gestes us telles,
 Whene Julyus and Joatalle ware juggede to dy,
 As was whene þe ryche mene of þe rownde table
 2880 Ruschede in-to þe rowte one ryalle stedes !
 ffor so rathely þay rusche with roselde speris,
 That the raskaille was rade, and rane to þe grefes,
 And karede to þat courte as cowardes for ever !

2884 “Peter !” sais syr Gawayne, “this gladdez myne herte !
 That ȝone gedlynges are gone, that made gret nowmbre !
 I hope that thees harlottez sall e harme us bot littille,
 ffore they wille hyde theme in haste with-in ȝone holte
 enis !

2888 Thay are feware one felde þan þay were fyrste nombirde,
 Be fourrty thousand in faythe, for alle theyre faire hostes.”
 Bot one Jolyan of Jene, a geante fulle howge,
 Has jonede one syr Jerant a justis of Walis ;

2892 Thorowe a jerownde schelde he jogges hym thorowe,
 And a fyne gesserawnte of gentille mayles !
 Joynter and gemows he jogges in sondyre !
 One a jambe stede þis jurnee he makes ;

2896 Thus es þe geante for-juste, that errawnte Jewe,
 And Gerard es jocunde, and joyes hym þe more !
 Than the genatours of Genne enjoynes att ones,
 And frykis one þe frowntere welle a fyve hundredre ;

2900 A freke highte syr ffederike, with fulle fele oþer,
 fferkes one a frusche, and fresclyche askryes
 To fyghte with oure fforreours, þat one felde hovis ;

Let them put
their trust in
Mary.

The enemy come
upon them.

Never was there
such a jousting.
Even that in the
valley of Jehosaphat
was not
equal to it.

The rascal rout
run, but the rich
men of the Round
Table fight
valiantly.

Gawaine rejoices
at the flight of
the rabble.

A huge giant is
slain by a Justice
of Wales.

Sir Frederick at-
tacks the British
forayers.

¹ *nenene* erased, and *mene* written in margin.

The knights of the Round Table advance and fight valiantly.

And thane the ryalle renkkes of þe rownde table
 2904 Rade furthe fulle ernestly, and rydis theme agaynes,
 Mellis with the medille warde, bot they ware ille machede;
 Of siche a grett multytude was mervayle to here.
 Seyne at þe assemble the Sarazenes discoveres
 2908 The soveraynge of Sessoyne, that salvede was never;
 Gyawntis for-justede with gentille knyghtes,
 Thorowe gesserawntes of Jene jaggede to þe herte!
 They hewe thorowe helmes hawtayne biernez,
 2912 þat þe hiltede swerdes to þaire hertes rynnys!
 Than þe renkkes renounde of the rownd table
 Ryffes and ruysches downe renayede wreches;
 And thus they drevene to þe dede dukes and erles,
 2916 Alle þe dreghe of þe daye, with dredfuller werkes!
Thanæ syr Priamous þe prynce, in presens of lordes,
 Presez to his penowne, and pertly it hentes;
 Revertede it redily, and a-waye rydys
 2920 To þe ryalle rowte of þe rownde table;
 And heylly his retenuz raykes hym aftyre,
 ffor they his resone had rede on his schelde ryche.
 Owte of þe scheltrone þey schede, as schepe of a folde,
 2924 And steris furth to þe stowre, and stode be þeire lorde!
 Seyne they sent to þe duke, and saide hym þis wordes,—
 “We hafe bene thy sowdeours this sex þere and more;
 We forsake þe to daye be serte of owre lorde!
 2928 We sewe to oure soveraynge in sere kynges londes;
 Us defawtes oure feez of þis foure wynterres;
 Thow art feble and false, and noghte bot faire wordes;
 Oure wages are werede owte, and þi werre endide,
 2932 We maye with oure wirchipe weend whethire us lykes!
 I red þowe trette of a trewe, and trofle no lengere,
 Or þow sall tyne of thi tale ten thosande or evene.”
 “ffya debles!” saide þe duke, “the develle have þourbones!
 2936 The dawngere of þon dogges drede schalle I never!
 We sall dele this daye, be dedes of armes,
 My dede and my ducherye, and my dere knyghtes!

Sir Priamus and his followers desert to the side of Arthur's men.

They upbraid the Duke of Lorraine for not having paid them their wages.

The Duke answers furiously.

Siche sowdeours as þe I sett bot att lyttile,

2940 That sodanly in defawte for-sakes theire lorde!"

The duke in his schelde and dreches no lengere,

Drawes him a dromedarie, with dredfull^e knyghtez;

Graythes to *syr* Gawayne with fulle gret nowmbyre

He charges Arthur's knights on a dromedary.

2944 Of gomes of Gernaide, that grevous are holdene;

Thas fresche horsesede mene to þe frownt rydes,

ffelles of oure fforreours be fourtty at ones!

They hade foughttene before with a fyve hundrethe;

Makes a great slaughter of the forayers.

2948 It was no ferly in faythe, þose they faynt waxene.

Thane *syr* Gawayne was grefede, and grypys his spere,

And gyrdex in agayne with galyarde knyghtez;

Metes þe maches of mees and melles hym thorowe,

2952 As man of þis medille erthe, þat moste hade grevede:

Bot on Chastelayne, a chylde of þe kynges chambyre,

Was warde to *syr* Wawayne of þe weste marches,

Cheses to *syr* Cheldride, a cheftayne noble,

Child-Chatelaine slays Sir Chilled,

2956 With a chasyng spere he chokkes hym thurghe!

This chekke hym^e eschewede be chauncez of armes;

So þay chase þat childe, eschape may he never!

Bot one Swyane of Swecy, with a swerde egge,

2960 The swyers swyre-bane he swappes in sondyre!

He swounande diede, and on þe swarthe lengede,

Sweltes ewynne swiftly, and swanke he no more!

and is slain by Swyan.

Than *syr* Gawayne gretes with his gray eghne;

2964 **T**he guyte was a gude mane, begynnande of armes:

ffore the charry childe so his chere chawngide,

That the chillande watire one his chekes rynnyde!

"Woo es me," quod Gawayne, "that I ne wetene hade;" Gawaine grieves for the Child.

2968 I sall^e wage for that wye alle þat I welde,

Bot I be wrokene on that wye, that thus has hym won-dyde!"

He dresses hym drerily, and to þe duke rydes,

Bot one *syr* Dolphyne the derfe dyghte hym agaynes,

He slays one Sir Dolphin.

2972 And *syr* Gawayne hym gyrd with a grym launce,

That the groundene spere glade to his herte!

Then Hardolf,
happy in arms,

and sixty more.

He avenges the
Child,

and cuts his way
through the
enemy.

The great deeds
of Arthur's chi-
valrous men se-
cure the victory.

Sir Florent
presses on with
five score
knights.

Sir Gawaine fol-
lows with cau-
tion,

And egerly he hente owte, and hurte anoþer,
An haythene knyght, Hardolfe, happye in armes ;

2976 Sleyghly in at the slotte slyttes hym thorowe,
That the slydande spere of his hande sleppes !
Thare es slayne in þat slope, be elagere of his hondes,
Sexty slongene in a slade of sleghes men of armes !

2980 þose syr Gawaynne ware wo, he wayttes hym by,
And was warre of þat wye that the childe wondyde,
And with a swerde swiftly he swappes him thorowe,
That he swyftly swelte, and on þe erthe swounes !

2984 And thane he raykes to þerowte, and ruysches one helmys ;
Riche hawberkes he rente, and rasede schyldes ;
Rydes one a rawndoune, and his rayke holdes ;
Thorow owte þe rerewardhe holdes wayes,
2988 And thare raughte in the reyne this ryalle þe ryche,
And rydez in-to the rowte of þe rownde table.

Thanre oure chevalrous men changene theire horsez,
Chases and choppes downe cheftaynes noble !

2992 Hittes fulle hertely on helmes and scheldes,
Hurtes and hewes downe haythene knyghtez !
Ketelle hattes they cleve evene to þe scholdirs !
Was never siche a clamour of capitaynes in erthe !

2996 Thare was kynges sonnes kaughte, curtays and noble,
And knyghtes of þe contre, that knawene was ryche ;
Lordes of Lorayne and Lombardye bothene.
Laughe was and lede in with our lele knyghtez ;

3000 Thas þat chasede that daye, their chaunce wasbettire,
Swiche a cheke at a chace eschevede theyme never !

When syr florent be fyghte had þe felde wonene,
He fferkes ine before with fyve score knyghtez ;

3004 Theire prayes and theire presoneres passes one aftyre,
With pylours, and pavysers, and pryse mene of armes.

Thane gudly syr Gawayne gydes his knyghtez,
Gas in at þe gayneste, as gydes hym telles,

3008 ffore greffe of a garysone of fulle gret lordes
Sulde noghte gripe up his gere, ne swyche grame wurche :

ffore-thy they stode at the straytez, and with his stale
hovede,

Tille his prayes ware paste the pathe that he dredis;

3012 Whene they the cete myghte see that the kyng seggede,
Sothely the same daye was wit asawte wonnene,
An hawrawde hyes before, the beste of the lordes,

and sees the city
which Arthur
was besieging
won on the same
day;

Hom at þe herbergage, owt of tha hyghe londes;
3016 Tornys tytte to þe tente, and to the kynge telles
Alle the tale sothely, and how they hade syede;—

“Alle thy forreours are fere, that forrayede with-owtynne,
Sir florent, and syr floridas, and alle thy ferse knyghez:

for Arthur had
been told of the
victory of his
knights by an
herald,

3020 Thay hafe forrayede and fughtene with fulle gret nowm-
byre,

And fele of thy foo-mene has broghte owt of lyffe!

Oure wirchipfulle wardayne es wele eschevyde,
ffor he has wonne to-daye wirchipp for evere!

and how Sir Ga-
waine had won
mighty honour.

3024 He has Dolfyne slayne, and þe duke takyne!

Many dowghty es dede by dynt of his hondes!
He has prisoners price, pryncez and erles,
Of þe richeste blode þat regnys in erthe!

3028 Alle thy chevallrous mene faire are eschewede,
Bot a childe Chasteleyne myschance es befallene.”

Then he rejoiced
and gave a hun-
dred pounds lar-
gess,

“Hawtayne,” sais þe king, “ harawde be Criste!

Thow has helyd myne herte, I hete the for-sothe!

3032 I ȝife the in Hamptone a hundredth pownde large.”

The kyng ȝan to assawte he sembles his knyghez,
With somercastelle and sowe appone sere halfes;
Skystis his skotiferis, and skayles the wallis,

and, assembling
his knights, as-
saults the city.

3036 And iche wache has his warde with wiese mene of armes.

Thane boldly ȝay buske, and bendes engynes,
Payses in pylotes and proves theire castes;

Mynsteris and masondewes they malle to þe erthe,

3040 Chirches and chapelles chalke whitte blawnchede.

Stone tepelles fulle styffe in þe strete ligges,
Chawmbyrs with chymnes, and many cheefe inns;
Paysede and pelid downe playsterede walles;

They carry all
before them.

3044 The pyne of þe pople was pete for to here !
 Thane þe duchez hire dyghte with damesels ryche,
 The countas of Crasyne with hir clere madyns,
 Knelis downe in the kyrnelles thare the kyng hovede,

3048 On a coverede horse comlyli a rayede ;
 They knewe hym by contenaunce, and criede full^e
 lowde,—

*The ladies sue
for mercy.*

“ Kyng crownde of kynde, take kepe to þese wordes !
 We be-seke ȝow, *syr*, as soveraynge and lorde,

3052 That ȝe safe us to daye, for sake of ȝoure Criste !
 Sende us some socoure, and saughte with the pople,
 Or þe cete be sodaynly with assawte wonnene !”
 He weres his vesere with a vowe noble,

3056 With vesage verteuous, this valyant bierne ;
 Moles to hir mildly with full^e meke wordes,—
 “ Salle no mysse do ȝow, ma-dame, þat to me lenges ;
 I gyf ȝow chartire of pes, *and* ȝoure cheefe maydens,

3060 The childire and þe chaste mene, the chevalrous knyghtez ;
 The duke es in dawngere, dredis it bott lyttyle !
 He sall^e I dene þe full^e wele, dout ȝow noghte elles.”
 Thane sent he one iche a syde to certayne lordez,

*The city is sur-
rendered.*

3064 ffor to leve þe assawte, the cete was ȝoldene ;
 With þe erle eldeste sone he sent hym þe kayes,
 And seside þe same dyghte, be sent of þe lordes :
 The duke to Dovere es nyghte, and alle his dere knyghtez,

*The Duke is sent
to Dover as a
prisoner.*

3068 To duelle in dawngere and dole þe dayes of hys lyve,
 Thare fleedeat the ferrere ȝate folke withowtynenombyre,
 ffor ferde of *syr* fflorent and his fers knyghtez ;
 Voydes the cete and to the wode rynnys,

Many of the in-
habitants escape.

3072 With vetaile, and vesselle, and vestoure so ryche :
 Thay buske up a banere abowne þe brode ȝates
 Of *syr* fflorent in ffay, so fayne was he never !
 The knyghte hovys on a hylle, beholde to þe wallys,

*The knights see
the sign of the
capture of the
city.*

3076 And saide, “ I see be ȝone syngne the cete es oures !”
 Sir Arthure enters anone with hostes arayede,
 Evene at þe undrone etles to lenge ;

*Arthur preserves
strict discipline.*

In iche levere on lowde the kynge did crye,
 3080 Of Payne of lyf and lym and lesynge of londes,
 That no lele ligemane that to hym lonngede
 Sulde lye be no ladysse, ne be no lele maydyns,
 Ne be no burgesse wyffe, better ne wërse ;
 3084 Ne no biernez myse-bide, that to þe burghe longede.

When *þe* kyng Arthur had lely conquerid,
 And the castelle coverede of *þe* kythe riche,
 Alle *þe* crowelle and kene, be craftes of armes,
 3088 Captayns and constables, knewe hym for lorde.
 He devysede and delte to dyverse lordez,
 A dowere for *þe* duchez and hir dere childire ;
 Wroghte wardaynes by wytte to welde alle *þe* londes,
 3092 That he had wonnene of werre, thorowe his weise knyghtez.
 Thus in Lorayne he lenges as lord in his awene,
 Settez lawes in the lande, as hym leefe toghte ;
 And one *þe* Lammese daye to Lucerne he wendez,
 3096 Lengez thare at laysere with lykynge i-nowe ;
 Thare his galays ware graythede, a fulle gret nombyre,
 Alle gleterand as glase, undire grene hyllys,
 With cabanes coverede for kynges anoyntede,
 3100 With clothes of clere golde for knyghtez and *oþer* ;
 Sone stowede theire stuffe, and stablede *þe* ire horses,
 Strekes streke over *þe* strem in-to *þe* strayte londes.
 Now he moves his myghte with myrthes of herte,
 3104 Overe mowntes so hye, *þe* base mervailous wayes ;
 Gosse in by Goddarde, the garett be wynnys,
 Graythes the garnisone grisely wondes !
 Whene he was passede the heghte, than the kyng hovys
 3108 With his hole bataylle, be-haldande abowte,
 Lukande one Lombarddye, and one lowde melys,—
 “ In *ȝ*one lykande londe, lorde be I thynke.”
 Thane they cayre to Combe, with kyngez anoyntede,
 3112 That was kyde of *þe* coste, kay of alle *oþer* :

Arthur provides
for the govern-
ment of Lorraine
which he had
conquered.

At Lammas he
goes to Lucerne.

His fair galleys
are assembled.

He leads his
forces over the
high mountains
by marvellous
ways ;

passes the St.
Gothard after de-
feating the gar-
rison ;

looks down on
Lombardy, and
advances to
Como.

Sir florent and *syr* floridas þan fowndes before,
 With ffreke mene of ffraunce welle a fyve hundredth ;
 To þe cete unsene thay soghte at þe gayneste,

Sir Florent plants an ambush, 3116 And sett an embuschement, als þeme-selfe lykys ;
 Thane ischewis owt of þat cete fulle sone be þe morne,
 Slale discoverours, skyftes theire horses ;
 Than skyftes þes skoverours, and skippes one hyllis,
 3120 Discoveres for skulkers that they no skathe lympene ;
 Poveralle and pastorelles passede one aftyre,
 With porkes to pasture at the price þates ;
 Boyes in þe subarbis bourdene ffull heghe,
 3124 At a bare synglere that to þe bente rynnys.

and captures the city.

The city Combe is won.

The Lord of Milan sends to offer submission

3128 ffowre stretis, or þay stynte, they stroyene fore ever !
 Now es the conquerour in Combe, and his courte holdes
 3132 With-in the kyde castelle, with kynges enoynttede ;
 Be consaillez the commons þat to þe kyth lengez,
 Comfourthes þe carefull with knyghtly wordez ;
 Made a captayne kene a knyghte of hys awene,
 Bot alle the contré and he fulle sone ware accordide.
 The syre of Melane herde saye þe cete was wonnene,
 3136 And send to Arthure sertayne lordes,
 Grete sommes of golde, sexti horse chargegid,
 Be-soghte hym as soverayne to socoure þe pople,
 And saide he wolde sothely be sugette for ever,
 3140 And make hym servee and suytte for his sere londes ;
 ffor plesaunce of Pawnce, and of Pownte Tremble,
 ffor Pyse, and for Pavys, he profers fulle large,
 Bothe purpur, and palle, and precious stony,
 3144 Palfrayes for any prynce, and provede stedes ;
 And ilke a þere for Melane a melione of golde,
 Mekely at Martynmesse to menske with his hordes ;
 And ever withowtynne askyng he and his ayers
 3148 Be homagers to Arthure, whilles his lyffe lastis.

The kyng^e be his concelle a condethe hym sendis,
And he es comene to Combe, and knewe hym as lorde.

He pays homage
to Arthur at
Como.

1352 **I**nto Tuskané he tournez, whene þus wele tymede,
Takes townnes fulle tyte with towrres fulle heghe ;
Walles he welte downe, wondyd knyghez,
Towrres he turnes, and turmentez þe pople !
Wroghte wedewes fulle wlonke, wrotherayle synges,
3156 Ofte wery and wepe, and wryngene theire handis ;
And alle he wastys with werre, thare he awaye rydez ;
Thaire welthes and theire wonnyges, wandrethe he
wroghte !

Arthur enters
Tuscany,

Thus they spryngene and sprede, and sparis bot lyttile,
3160 Spoylles dispetouslye, and spillis theire vynes ;
Spendis un-sparely, þat spared was lange,
Spedis theme to Spolett with speris inewe !
ffro Spayne in-to Spruyslande the worde of hym
sprynges,

and ravages the
country.

3164 And spekynnges of his spencis, dissppite es fulle hugge !
Towarde Viterbe this valyant avires the reynes ;
Avissely in þat vale he vetailles his biernez,
With vernage, and oþer wyne, and venysone bakene ;

He pitches his
camp in the Vale
of Viterbo.

3168 And one the vicounte londes he visez to lenge.
Vertely the avawmwarde voydez theire horsez ;
In the Vertennone vale, the vines imangez,
Thare suggeournes this souerayne, with solace in herte,

3172 To see whene the senatours sent any wordes ;
Revelle with riche wyne, riotes hym selfene,
This roy with his ryalle mene of þe rownde table,
With myrthis, and melodye, and many kyne gammes ;

The king and his
knights make
great merriment.

3176 Was never meriere men made on^e this erthe !

Bot one a Saterdaye at none, a sevnyghe thare aftyre,
The konyngeste cardynalle that to the courte lengede
Knelis to þe conquerour, and karpes thire wordes,—

The cunningest
Cardinal of Rome
is sent to him,

3180 Prayes hym for þe pes, and profyrs fulle large,
To hafe pete of þe Pope, þat put was at-undere ;
Be-soghte hym of surrawns, for sake of oure Lorde,

Bot a sevenyghte daye to þay ware alle semblede,
 and offers that the Pope shall 3184 And they schulde sekerlye hym see the Sonondaye
 crown him as Sovereign in Rome.
 3185 þeraftyre,
 In the cete of Rome, as soveraynge and lorde ;
 And crowne hym kyndly with krysomede hondes,
 With his ceptre, as soveraynge and lorde :
 Hostages are given for the truth of his words.

3188 Of this undyrtakyngē ostage are comyne,
 Of ayers fulle avenaunt awughte score childrenne,
 In toges of tarsse fulle richelye attyrde,
 And betuke theme the kynge, and his clere knyghtes.

3192 When they had tretide thiere trewe, with trowmpyne
 þerafter
 They tryne unto a tente, whare tables whare raysede ;
 The kynge hymē selfene es sette, and certayne lordes,
 Undyre a sylure of sylke sawghte at the burdez :

3196 Alle the senatours are sette sere be þame one,
 Serfed solemply with selcouthe metes :
 The kyngē myghty of myrthe, with his milde wordes,
 Rehetez the Romayne at his riche table,

3200 Comforthes the cardynalle so kynghtly hymē selvene ;
 And this roye ryalle, as romawns us tellis,
 Reverence the Romayns in his riche table ;
 The tawghte mene and þe conyngē, whene theme tymē
 thoghte,

3204 Tas theire lefe at þe kynge, and tornede agayne ;
 To þe cete þat nyghte thaye soughe at þe gaynest,
 And thus the ostage of Rome with Arthure es levede.

Arthur glorifies himself for his great success. 3208 **T**han this roy royalle rehersys theis wordes,—
 “Now may we revelle and riste, fore Rome es
 oure awene !
 Make oure ostage at ese, þise avenaunt childyrene,
 And luk þe hondene theme alle that in myne oste lengez ;
 The emperor of Almayne, and alle theis este marches,

3212 We sallē be overlynge of alle þat one the erthe lengez !
 We wille by þe crosse dayes encroche þeis loydez,
 And at þe Crystynmesse daye be crownned ther-aftyre ;
 He will be crownned at Christmas

Ryngne in my ryalltes, and holde my rownde table,
 3216 Withe the rentes of Rome, as me beste lykes : in Rome, and hold his Round Table there.

Syne graythe over þe grette see with gud mene of armes,
 To revenge the renke that one the rode dyede !”

Thanе this comlyche knyge, as cronycles tellys,
 3220 Bownnys brathely to bede with a blythe herte ; He goes to bed and dreams.

Of he slynges with sleghte, and slakes gyrdille,
 And fore slewthe of slomowre one a slepe fallis.

Bot be ane aftyre mydnyghte alle his mode changede ;
 3224 He mett in the morne while fulle mervaylous dremes !

And whene his dredefulle drem whas drefene to þe ende,
 The kynge dares for dowte dye as he scholde ;

Sendes aftyre phylosophers, and his affraye telles,—

3228 “ Sene I was formede in fayth, so ferde whas I never ! He sends for his philosophers, and tells them the dream.

ffor-thy rawnsakes redyly, and rede me my swefennys,
 And I sallē redily and ryghte rehersene the sothe :

Me-thoughte I was in a wode willed myne one,
 3232 That I ne wiste no waye whedire þat I scholde, He was in a wood among wild beasts,

ffore wolvez, and whilde swynne, and wykkyde bestez,
 Walkede in that wasterne, wathes to seche ;

Thare lyouns fulle lothely lykkyde þeire tuskes,
 3236 Alle fore lapyng of blude of my lele knyghtez ! which were licking from their teeth the blood of his knights.

Thurgh þat foreste I flede, thare floures whare heghe,
 ffor to fele me for ferde of tha foule thyngez ;

Merkede to a medowe with montayngnes enclosyde,

3240 The meryeste of medill-erthe that mene myghte be-holde ! He flies to a beautiful meadow enclosed with mountains, and having vines of silver and grapes of gold.

The close was in compas castyne alle abowte,
 With claver and clereworte clede evene over ;

The vale was evene rownde with vynes of silver,

3244 Alle with grapis of golde, gretter ware never !

Enhorilde with arborye and alkyns trees,
 Erberis fulle honeste, and byrdez þere undyre ;

Alle froytez foddnid was þat floreschede in erthe,

3248 ffaire frithed in frawnke appone tha free bowes ;

Whas thare no downkyng of dewe that oghte dere
 scholde,

A beautiful
duchess descends
from the clouds,

dressed in gorge-
ous apparel,

who whirled a
strange wheel
with her hands,

upon which was
a chair made of
silver, and orna-
mented with car-
buncles.

Six kings, cling-
ing to the wheel,
strive to reach
the chair, but
they all fall to
the ground.

Each one of them
speaks sepa-
rately, and la-
ments his life
past and gone,
which had been
spent in riot and
wickedness,

therefore he is
damned for ever.

The first was a
little man with
eyes brighter
than silver.

With þe drowghte of þe daye alle drye ware þe flores !

Than discendis in the dale, downe fra þe clowddez,

3252 A duches dere-worthily dyghte in dyaperde wedis,

In a surcott of sylke fulle selkouthely hewede,

Alle with loyotour overlaide lowe to þe hemmes,

And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a þerde,

3256 And alle redily reversside with rebanes of golde,

Bruchez and besauntez, and oþer bryghte stonyz,

With hir bake and hir breste was brochede alle over,

With kelle and with corenalle clenliche arrayede,

3260 And þat so comly of colour one knowene was never !

A-bowte cho whirllide a whele with hir whitte hondez,

Over-whelme alle qwayntely þe wele as cho scholde ;

The rowelle whas rede golde with ryalle stonyz,

3264 Raylide with reched and rubyes inewe ;

The spekes was splentide alle with speltis of silver,

The space of a spere lenghe springande fulle faire ;

There one was a chayere of chalke-whyttie silver,

3268 And chekyrde with charebocle chawngynge of hewes ;

Appone þe compas ther clewide kyngis one rawe,

With corowns of clere golde þat krakede in sondire :

Sex was of þat setille fulle soðaynliche fallene,

3272 Ilke a segge by hymse selfe, and saide theis wordez,—

‘ That ever I regnede one þir rog, me rewes it ever !

Was never roye so riche that regnede in erthe !

Whene I rode in my rowte, roughte I noghte elles,

3276 Bot revaye, and revelle, and rawnsone the pople !

And thus I drife forthe my dayes, whilles I dreghe

myghte,

And there-fore derflyche I am dampned for ever !’

The laste was a litylle mane that laide was be-nethe,

3280 His leskes laye alle lene and latheliche to schewe,

The lokkes lyarde and longe the lenghe of a þerde,

His lire and his lyghame lamede fulle sore ;

þe two eyne of the byeryne was brighttere þane silver,

3284 The toþer was ȝalowere thene the ȝolke of a naye,—

‘I was lord,’ *quod* the lede, ‘of londes i-newe,
And alle ledis me lowttede that lengede in erthe ;
And nowe es lefte me no lappe my lygham to hele,
3288 Bot lightly now am I loste, leve iche mane the sothe !’
The secunde *syr* forsothe þat sewede theme aftyre,
Was sekerare to my sighte, and saddare in armes ;
Ofte he syghede unsownde, and said theis wordes,—

3292 ‘On ȝone see hafe I sittene, as soverayne and lorde,
And ladys me lovede to lappe in theyre armes ;
And nowe my lordchippes are loste, and laide for ever !’
The thirde thorowely was throo, and thikke in the schuldrys,

3296 A thra man to thrette of, there thretty ware gaderide ;
His dyademe was droppedde downe, dubbyde with stonyis,
Endente alle with diamawndis, and dighte for þe nonis ;
‘I was dredde in my dayes,’ he said, ‘in dyverse rewmes,

3300 And now dampnede to þe dede, and dole es the more !’
The fourte was a faire mane, and forsesy in armes,
þe fayreste of fegure that fourmede was ever !
‘I was frekke in my faithe,’ he said, ‘whilles I one fowlde regnede,

3304 ffamows in fferre londis, and floure of alle kynges ;
Now es my face defadide, and foule es me hapnede,
ffor I am fallene fro ferre, and frendles by-levyde !’
The fifte was a faire mane þane fele of thies oþer,

3308 A fforsey mane and a ferse, with fomand lippis ;
He fongede faste one þe feleyghes, and fayled his armes,
Bot ȝit he failede and felle a fyfty fote large ;
Bot ȝit he sprange and sprente, and spraddene his armes,

3312 And one þe spere lenghe spekes, he spekes þire wordes—
‘I was in Surrye a syr, and sett be myne one,
As soverayne and seyngnour of sere kynges londis ;
Now of my solace I am fulle sodanly fallene,

3316 And forsake of my synne, ȝone cete es me reweide !’
The sexte hade a sawtere semliche bowndene,
With a surepel of silke sewede fulle faire,

He had been lord of many lands, but now was lost.

The second had been sovereign of the sea, and loved of ladies.

The third was stout and strong.

He had been mightily feared in his day.

The fourth was very fair, but foul mischance had now happened to him.

The fifth was very fierce and violent.

He had been sovereign in Syria, but was now fallen.

The sixth had a psalter well-bound, a harp, and a sling.

He had been held
the doughtiest in
his day, but had
been marred by
the maiden.

Two kings are
seen who chal-
lenge the chair
hereafter, but fail
to reach it.

The one was pass-
ing fair of feature,
with a mighty 3320
forehead.

The other bore
the cross as an
ornament in to-
ken that he was
a Christian.

Arthur accosts
the Duchess, who
welcomes him.

He is chosen to
achieve the chair,

A harpe and a hande-slynge with harde flynte stones ;
3320 What harmes he has hente he halowes fulle sone,—
'I was demede in my dayes,' he said, ' of dedis of armes
One of the doughtyeste that duelled in erthe ;
Bot I was merride one molde in my moste strengethis,
3324 With this maydene so mylde, þat mofes us alle.'
Two kynges ware clymbande, and claverande one heghe,
The creste of þe compas they covette fulle ȝerne ;
'This chaire of charbokle,' they said, ' we chalange
here aftyre,
3328 As two of þe cheffeste chosene in erthe !'
The childire ware chalke-whitte, chekys and oþer,
Bot the chayere abownne chevede they never :
The forthirmaste was freely with a frount large,
3332 The faireste of fyssnanny þat fourmede was ever ;
And he was buskede in a blee of a blewe noble,
With flourdelice of golde floreschede al over ;
The toþer was cledde in a cote alle of clene silver,
3336 With a comliche crosse corvene of golde,
fowre crosselettes krafty by þe crosse riftes,
And ther-by knewe I the kynge, þat crystnede hym
semyde.
3340 **T**han I went to þat wlonke, and wynly hire gretis,
And cho said, ' welcome i-wis ! wele arte thou
fowndene ;
The aughte to wirchipe my wille, and thou wele cowthe,
Of alle the valyant men that ever was in erthe ;
ffore alle thy wirchipe in werre by me has thou wonnene,
3344 I hafe bene frendely freke, and fremmede tiller oper ;
That has þow fowndene in faithe, and fele of þi biernez,
ffore I fellid downe *syr* Frolle with frowarde knyghtes ;
ffore-thi the fruytes of Fraunce are freely thynne awene.
3348 Thow sall þe chayere escheve, I chese þe my-selfene,
Be-fore alle þe cheftaynes chosene in this erthe.
Scho lifte me up lightly with hir lene hondes,
And sette me softly in the see, þe septre me rechede ;

and sit therein.

3352 Craftely with a kambe cho kembede myne hevede,
 That the krispane kroke to my crownne raughte ;
 Dressid one me a diademe, that dighte was fulle faire,
 And syne profres me a pome pighte fulle of faire stonye,
 The kingly ornaments are given to him.

3356 Enamelde with azoure, the erth there-one depayntide,
 Selkylde with the salte see appone sere halfes,
 In sygne þat I sothely was soverayne in erthe :
 Than broght cho me a brande with fulle bryghte hiltes, A sword with
 3360 And bade me brawndysche þe blade, 'þe brande es myne bright hilt is brought for him.
 awene :
 Many swayne with þe swynges has the swtte levede ;
 ffor whilles thow swanke with the swerde, it swykkede
 þe never.'
 Than raykes cho with roo, and riste whene hir likede,

3364 To þe ryndes of þe wode, richere was never ;
 Was no pomarie so pighte of pryncees in erthe,
 Ne nonne apparaylle so prowde, bot paradys one.
 Scho bad þe bowes scholde bewe downe, and bryng to my hondes

3368 Of þe beste that they bare one brawnches so heghe ;
 Than they heldede to hir heste alle holly at ones,
 The hegheste of iche a hirste, I hette ȝow forsothe :
 Scho bade me fyrthe noghte þe fruyte, bot fonde whilles He is bid take
 me likede, freely of the finest.

3372 'ffonde of þe fyneste, thow freliche byerne,
 And reche to the ripeste, and ryotte thy selvene !
 Riste, thow ryalle roye, for Rome es thyne awene !
 And I sall redily rolle the roo at þe gayneste,

3376 And reche the þe riche wyne in rynsede coupes.' The lady draws
 Thane cho wente to the welle by þe wode enis,
 That alle wellyde of wyne, and wonderliche rynnes ;
 Kaughte up a coppe-fulle, and coverde it faire ;

3380 Scho bad me dereliche drawe, and drynke to hir selfene : and bids him
 And thus cho lede me abowte the lenghe of an owre,
 With alle likynge and luffe, þat any lede scholde ;
 Bot at þe myddaye fulle ewyne all hir mode chaungede, But at mid-day
 all was changed.

3384 And mad myche manace with mervayllous wordez ;
 Whene I cryede appone hire, chokest downe hir browes,
 ' Kyng, thow karpes for noghte, be Criste þat me made !
 ffor thow sall lose this layke, and thi lyfe aftyre !

3388 Thow has lyffede in delytte and lordchippes innewe !'
 Abowte scho whirles the whele, and whirls me undire,
 Tille alle my qwarters þat whille whare qwaste al to peces !
 And with that chayere my chyne was chopped in sondire !

3392 And I hafe cheveride for chele, sen me this chance
 happenede.
 Than wakkenyde I i-wys, alle wary for-dremyde,
 And now wate thow my woo, worde as þe lykes."

3396 "ffreke," sais the philosophre, "thy fortune es passede !
 ffor thow sall fynd hir thi foo, frayste whene the lykes !
 Thow arte at þe hegheste, I hette the for-sothe !
 Chalange nowe when thow wille, thow chevys no more !
 Thow has schedde myche blode, and schalkes destroyede,

3400 Sakeles in sirquytrie, in sere kynges landis ;
 Schryfe the of thy schame, and schape for thyne ende !
 Thow has a schewynge, *syr* kynge, take kepe þif the like !
 ffor thow sall fersely falle with-in fyve wynters !

3404 ffownde abbayes in ffrance, þe froytez are theyne awene,
 ffore ffroille, and for fferawnt, and for thir ferse knyghtis,
 That thow fremydly in ffrance has faye belevede ;
 Take kepe þitte of oþer kynges, and kaste in thyne herte,

3408 That were conquerours kydde, and crownnede in erthe ;
 The eldeste was Alexandere, þat alle þe erthe lowttede ;
 The toþer Ector of Troye, the chevalrous gume ;
 The thirde Julyus Cesare, þat geant was holdene,

3412 In iche journe jentille, ajuggede with lordes ;
 The ferthe was *syr* Judas, a justere fulle nobille,
 The maysterfulle Makabee, the myghtyeste of strenghes ;
 The fyfte was Josue, þat joly mane of armes,

3416 That in Jerusalem oste fulle myche joye lymppede ;
 The sexte was David þe dere, demyd with kynges
 One of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever,

She speaks to him fiercely, and tells him that he shall lose his life.

She gives the wheel a whirl and sends him flying from the chair, bruised and injured.

The philosophers interpret the dream, and tell Arthur that his good fortune is passed.

He is to prepare for his end,

and to found Abbeys in France.

He is bid take warning from the other kings who had tried the chair.

The first was Alexander ; the second Hector ; the third Julius Caesar ;

the fourth Sir Judas, the Macabee ;

the fifth Joshua ;

the sixth was David, who slew great Goliath.

ffor he slewe with a slynge, be sleighte of his handis,
 3420 Golyas the grette gome, grymmeste in erthe ;
 Syne endittede in his dayes alle the dere psalmes,
 þat in þe sawtire ere sette with selcouthe wordes ;
 The two clymbande kynges, I knawē it forsothe,
 3424 Salle Karolus be callide, the kyng sonē of Fraunce ;
 He sallē be crowelle and kene, and conquerour holdene,
 Coverē be conqueste contres ynnewe ;
 He sallē encroche the crowne that Crist bare hym selfene,
 3428 And þat lifeliche launce, that lepe to his herte,
 When he was cruceyfiede on crose, and alle þe kene naylis,
 Knyghtly he sallē conquere to Cristyne men hondes :
 The toþer sallē be Godfraye, that Gode schallē revenge
 3432 One þe Gud Frydaye with galyarde knyghtes ;
 He sallē of Lorrayne be lorde, be leefe of his fadire,
 And syne in Jerusalem myche joye happyne,
 ffor he sallē cover the crosse be craftes of armes,
 3436 And synne be corownde kyng, with krysome enoynttede ;
 Sallē no duke in his dayes siche destanye happyne !
 Ne siche myschefe dreghe, whene trowthe sallē be tryede !
 ffore-thy ffortune þe fetches to fulfille the nowmbyre,
 3440 Alles nynne of þe nobileste namede in erthe ;
 This sallē in romance be redde with ryalle knyghtes,
 Rekkenede and renownde with ryotous kynges,
 And demyd one domesdaye, for dedis of armes,
 3444 ffor þe doughtyeste þat ever was duelland in erthe :
 So many clerkis and kynges sallē karpe of þoure dedis,
 And kepe þoure conquestez in cronycle for ever !
 Bot the wolfes in the wode, and the whilde bestos,
 3448 Are some wikkyd mene that werrayes thy rewmes,
 Es entirde in thyne absence to werraye thy pople,
 And alyenys and ostes of uncouthe landis :
 Thow getis tydandis I trowe, within tene dayes,
 3452 That some torfere es tydde, sene thow fro home turnede ;
 I rede thow rekkyne and reherse un·resonable dedis,
 Ore the repenttes fulle rathe alle thi rewthe werkes !

Of the two kings
who were climb-
ing, one should
be called Carolus
of France ;

the other God-
frey of Lorraine,
who should re-
cover the true
cross.

Arthur is needed
to make up the
number of the
nine noblest.

He shall be cele-
brated for ever
as the doughtiest
on earth.
Many clerks shall
tell of his deeds.

The wild beasts
are wicked men
that are worrying
his people.

He will have
some tidings
within ten days.

He is bid to re-
pent and amend.

Mane, amende thy mode, or thow myshappene,

3456 And mekely aske mercy for mede of thy saule!"

The king rises
and puts on his
robes.

Thaner rysez the riche kynge, and rawghte onē his wedys,

A reedde actone of Rosse, the richest of floures,

A pesane, and a paunsone, and a pris girdille;

3460 And one he hentis a hode of scharlette fulle riche,

A pavys pillionē hatt, þat pighte was fulle faire

With perry of þe oryent, and precyous stones;

His gloves gayliche gilte, and gravene by þe hemmys,

3464 With graynes of rubyes fulle gracious to schewe:

His hede grehownde, and his bronde, ande no byerne elles,

And bownnes over a brode mede, with breth at his herte;

ffurth he stalkis a stye by þa stille enys,

3468 Stotays at a hey strette, studyande hymē one;

He sees a man
approaching in
strange attire,

Att the surs of þe sonne, he sees there commande,

Raykande to Romewarde the redyeste wayes,

A renke in a rownde cloke, with righte rowmme clothes,

3472 With hatte, and with heyghe schone homely and rownde;

With flatte ferthynges the freke was floreschede alle over,

Many schredys and schragges at his skyrtes hynnges,

With scrippe, ande with slawyne, and skalopis i-newe,

who appears like
a pilgrim.

3476 Both pyke and palme, alles pilgram hym scholde:

The gome graythely hym grette, and bade gode morwene;

The kyng lordelye hymselfe, of langage of Rome,

Of Latyne corroumppede alle, fulle lovely hym menys,—

He asks him
whither he is
going,

3480 "Whedire wilnez thowe, wye, walkande thyne onne?

Qwhylles þis werle es o werre, a wawhte I it holde!

Here es ane enmye with oste, undire ȝone vynes;

And they see the for-sothe, sorowe the be-tyddes;

3484 Bot ȝif thow hafe condethe of þe kynge selfene,

Knaves willē kille the, and keppe at thow haves;

And if þou halde þe hey waye, they hente the also,

Bot if thow hastyly hafe helpe of his hende knyghttes."

and tells him the
dangers of the
way.

The stranger
knight says that
he fears no dan-
gers.

3488 **T**haner karpes syr Cradoke to the kynge selfene,

"I sallē for-gyffe hym my dede, so me Gode helpe!

Onye grome undire Gode, that one this grownde walkes!

Latte the keneste come, that to þe kyng langes,
 3492 I sall^e encountire hym^e as knyghte, so Criste hafe my
 sawle !

ffor thou may noghte reche me, ne areste thy selfene,
 þoffe thou be richely arayede in fulle riche wedys ;
 I wille noghte wonde for no werre, to wende whare me
 likes,

3496 Ne for no wy of this werlde, þat wroghte es one^e erthe !

Bot I wille passe in pilgremage þis pas unto Rome,
 To purchese me *perdonne* of the pape selfene ;

He is bound in
pilgrimage to
Rome.

And of paynes of purgatorie be plenerly assayledle ;

3500 Thane sall^e I seke sekirly my soverayne lorde,

Sir Arthure of Inglande, that avenaunt byerne !

Then he has to
find Arthur of
England.

ffor he es in this empire, as hathelle men me telles,
 Ostayande in this oryente with awfulle knyghtes."

3504 "F^ro qwyne come þou, kene mane," quod þe kynge
 thane,

"That knawes kynge Arthure, and his knyghtes also ?

Was þou ever in his courte, qwyll^es he in kyth lengede ?

Arthur demands
of the knight who
he is.

Thow karpes so kyndly, it comforthes myne herte !

3508 Well wele has þou wente, and wysely þou sechis,

ffor þou arte Bretowne bierne, as by thy brode speche."

"Me awghte to knowe þe kynge, he es my kydd^e lorde,
 And I calde in his courte a knyghte of his chambire ;

He tells him that
his name is Sir
Cradok, a knight
of Arthur's cham-
ber, and keeper of
Caerleon.

3512 Sir Craddoke was I callide, in his courte riche,

Kepare of Karlyone, undir the kynge selfene ;

Nowe am I cachede owt^e of kyth, with kare at my herte,
 And that castelle es cawghte with uncowthe ledys."

3516 Than the comliche kynge kaughte hym in arms,

Keste of his ketille-hatte, and kyssede hym^e fulle sone,

Saide, "welcome, *syr* Craddoke, so Criste mott me helpe !
 Dere cosyne of kynde, thowe coldis myne herte !

The king kisses
and welcomes Sir
Cradok.

3520 How faris it in Bretaynne, with alle my bolde berynes ?

Are they brettene^e, or brynte, or broughte owt^e of lyve ?

Kene þou me kyndely whatte caase es be-fallene ;

I kepe no credens to crafte, I knawe the for trewe."

Sir Cradok tells him of the evil deeds of Modred.

3524 "Sir, thi wardane es wikkede, and wilde of his dedys ;
 ffor he wandreth has wroghte, sen þou awaye passede ;
 He has castelles encrochede, and corownde hym selvene,
 Kaughte in alle þe rentis of þe rownde tabille ;

3528 He devisede þe rewme, and delte as hym likes ;
 Dubbede of þe Danmarkes, dukes and erlles,
 Disseveride þeme sondirwise, and cites distroyede ;
 To Sarazenes and Sessoynes, appone sere halves,

He has levied forces of paynims and infidels, 3532 He has semblede a sorte of selcouthe berynes,
 Soveraynes of Surgenale, and sowdeours many,
 Of Peyghtes and Paynynms, and provede knyghttes
 Of Irelande and Orgaile, owtlawede berynes ;

3536 Alle thaas laddes are knyghttes þat lange to þe mowntes,
 And ledynge and lordechipe has alle, alles theme selfe
 likes ;
 And there es *syr* Childrike a cheftayne holdyne,
 That ilke chevalrous mane, he charges thy pople ;

who rob the religious and ravish the nuns. 3540 They robbe thy religeous, and ravichse thi nonnes,
 And redy ryddis with his rowtte to rawnsone þe povere ;
 ffro Humbyre to Hawyke he haldys his awene,
 And alle the countrē of Kentt be covenawnte entayllide ;

He has seized the whole of England and all Arthur's castles. 3544 The comliche castelles that to the corowne langede,
 The holtes, and the hare wode, and the harde bankkes,
 Alle þat Henguste and Hors hent in þeire tyme ;
 Att Southamptone on the see es sevener skore chippes,

He has a fleet of seven score ships at Southampton. 3548 ffrawghte fulle of ferse folke, owt of ferre landes,
 ffor to fyghte with thy ffrappe, whene þow themē assailles.
 Bot ȝitt a worde witterly, thowe watte noghte þe werste !

But, worst of all, he has taken Guinever, and lives with her as his wife ! 3552 He has weddede Waynore, and hir his wieffe holdis,
 And wounnys in the wilde bowndis of þe weste marches,
 And has wroghte hire with childe, as witnesse telles !
 Off alle þe wyes of þis worlde, woo motte hym worthe,
 Alles wardayne unworthye womene to þeme !

3556 Thus has *syr* Modred merred us alle !
 ffor-thy I merkede over thees mowntes, to mene þe the
 sothe."

Than the burliche kynge, for brethe at his herte,
And for this botelesse bale alle his ble chaungide !

Arthur is overcome by the tidings, and vows revenge.

3560 "By þe rode," sais þe roye, "I sallē it revenge !
Hym sallē repente fulle rathe alle his rewthe werkes !"
Alle wepande for woo he went to his tentis ;
Unwlynly this wyesse kynge, he wakkenysse his berynes,

3564 Clepid in a clariounē kynges and othire,
Callys theme to concelle, and of þis cas tellys,—
"I am with tresone be-trayede, for alle my trewe dedis !
And alle my travayle es tynt, me tydis nobettire !

3568 Hym sallē torfere betyde, þis tresone has wroghte,
And I may traistely hym take, as I am trew lorde !
This es Modrede, þe mane that I most traystede,
Has my castelles encrochede, and corownde hymē selvene,
3572 With renttes and reches of the rownde table ;
Has made alle hys retenewys of renayede wreichis,
And devysed my rewme to dyverse lordes,
To sowdeours and to Sarazenes owtte of sere londes !

3576 He has weddyde Waynore, and hyr to wyefe holdes,
And a childe es eschapede, the chaunce es nobettire !
They hafe semblede on the see sevener schore chippis,
ffulle of ferromē folke, to feghte with myne one !

3580 ffor-thy to Bretayne the brode buske us by-hovys,
ffor to brettyne the berynne that has this bale raysede !
Thare sallē no freke men fare, bott alle one fresche horses,
That are fraistede in fyghte, and floure of my knyghtez :

They must proceed to Britain at once with all speed.

3584 Sir Howell and syr Hardolfe here sallē be leve,
To be lordes of the ledis that here to me lenges ;
Lokes in-to Lombardye, that thare no lede chaunge,—
And tendirly to Tuskayne take tente alles I byde ;

Sir Howell and Sir Hardolfe are left behind to govern Rome and Italy.

3588 Resaywe the rentis of Rome qwene þay are rekkenede ;
Take sesyne the same daye that laste waste assygnede,
Or elles alle þe ostage withowtayne þe wallys,
Be hynggyde hye appone hyghte alle holly at ones !"

3592 N owe bownes the bolde kynge with beste knyghtes,
Gers trome and trusse and trynes forth aftyre ;

Arthur and his best knights journey rapidly towards Britain.

Turnys thorowe Tuskayne, taries bot littill,
 Lyghte neghte in Lumbarddye bot whene þe lyghte
 failede;

3596 Merkes over the mowntaynes fulle mervaylous wayes,
 Ayres thurgh Almaygne evyne at the gayneste ;
 fferkes evynne in-to fflawndresche with hys ferse
 knyghttes ;

Within fyftene dayes his flete es assembled.

3600 And thane he schoupe hym to chippe, and schownnes
 no lengere,

Scherys with a charpe wynde over þe schyre waters ;
 By þe roche with ropes he rydes one ankkere,

Thare the false men^e fletyde, and one flode lengede,

3604 With chefe chaynes of chare chokkode to gedrys,
 Charggede evyne cheke-fulle of chevalrous knyghtes ;
 And in þe hynter one heghte, helmes and crestes,
 Hatches with haythene mene hillyd ware thare undyre,

3608 Prowdliche prutrayede with payntede clothys,
 Iche a pece by pece prykkyde tylle oþer,
 Dubbyde with dagswaynnes dowblede they seme ;
 And thus þe derfe Danamarkes had dyghte alle theyre
 chippys,

3612 That no dynte of no darte dere theme ne schoulde :
 Than the roye and þe renkes of the rownde table
 Alle ryally in rede arrayes his chippis ;

That daye ducheryes he delte, and doubbyde knyghttes,

3616 Dresses dromowndes and dragges, and drawene upe
 stony;

The toppe-castelles he stuffede with toyelys, as hym
 lykyde,

Bendys bowes of vys brothly þare aftyre,
 Tolowris tently takelle they ryghttene,

3620 Brasene hedys fulle brode buskede one flones,
 Graythes for garnysones gomes arrayes ;
 Gryme gaddes of stèle, ghywes of iryne,
 Stirttelys steryne one steryne with styffe mene of armes ;

In Flanders his
fleet is assembled.

He discovers the
fleet of the enemy
armed and pre-
pared for fight.

Then he makes
ready his ships
for the battle.

3624 Mony lufliche launce appone lofte stoundys,
 Ledys one leburde, lordys and *oþer*,
 Pyghe payvese one porte, payntede scheldes,
 One hyndire hurdace one highte helmede knyghtez.

3628 Thus they scheftene fore schotys one thas schire strandys,
 Ilke schalke in his schrowde, fulle scheene ware þeire
 wedys.

The bolde kynge es in a barge and a-bowtte rowes,
 Alle bare-hevvede for besye with beveryne lokkes ;

3632 And a beryne with his bronde, and ane helme betyne,
 Mengede with a mawnclelet of maylis of silver,
 Compaste with a coronalle, and coverde fulle ryche ;
 Kayris to yche a cogge, to comfurthe his knyghttes :

3636 To Clegys and Cleremownde he cryes one lowde,—
 “ O Gawayne ! O Galyrane ! thies gud mens bodyes.”
 To Loth and to Lyonelle fulle lovefly he melys,
 And to *syr* Lawncelot de Lake lordliche wordys,—

3640 “ Lat es covere þe kyth, the coste es owre ownne ;
 And gere theme brotheliche blenke, alle ȝone blod-hondes !
 Brytayne them with-in bourde, and brynnre theme þare
 aftyre !

Hewe downe hertly ȝone heythene tykes !

3644 They are harlotes halfe, I hette ȝow myne honnde !”
 Than he coveres his cogge, and caches one ankere,
 Kaughte his comliche helme with þe clere maylis ;
 Buskes baners one brode, betyne of gowles,

3648 With corowns of clere golde clenliche arraiede ;
 Bot þare was chosene in þe chefe a chalke-whitte maydene,
 And a childe in hir arme, þat chefe es of hevynne :
 Withowttene changynge in chace, thies ware þe cheefe
 armes

3652 Of Arthure þe avenaunt, qwhylls he in erthe lengede.
 Thane the marynerse mellys, and maysters of chippis,
 Merily iche a mate menys tille *oþer* ;
 Of theire termys they talke, how þay ware tydd,

3656 Towyne tresselle one trete, trussene upe sailes,

and rows round
the fleet to see
that everything
is prepared.

He exhorts his
knights to be of
good courage,

goes to his ship,
and orders the
anchor to be
raised.

His device is a
picture of our
Lady and the
Child.

The sailors busy
themselves to get
the ships under
weigh

They sail across
the strait and the
battle begins.

Bot bonettez one brede, bettrede hatches ;
Brawndeste browne stele, braggede in trompes ;
Standis styffe one the stamyne, steris one aftyre ;

3660 Strekyne over þe streme, thare stryvyng be-gynnes.
ffro þe wagande wynde owte of þe weste rysses,
Brethly bessomes with byrre in berynes sailles ;
With hir bryngges one burde burliche cogges,

3664 Qwhylls þe bilynge and þe beme brestys in sondyre ;
So stowttly þe forsterne one þe stam hyttis,

þat stokkes of þe stere-burde strykkys in peces !
Be thane cogge appone cogge, krayers and oþer,

There is great
dashing together
of ships.

Grapplings are
thrown out.

3668 Castys crepers one crosse als to þe crafte langes :

Thane was hede-rapys hewene þat helde upe þe mastes ;

Thare was conteke fulle kene, and crachynge of chippys !
Grett cogges of kampe crasseches in sondyre !

3672 Mony kabane clevede, cabilles destroyede !

Knygthes and kene mene killide the braynes !

Castles built on
the decks are
thrown down.

Kidd castelles were corvene with alle theire kene wapene,
Castelles fulle comliche, þat coloured ware faire !

3676 Upcynes eghelynge þay ochene þare aftyre,

Masts fall and kill
the mariners.

With þe swyng of þe swerde sweys þe mastys ;

Ovyre-fallys in þe firste frekis and othire,
ffrekke in þe forchipe fey es bylevefede !

3680 Than brothely they bekyre with boustouse tacle,

Boardings are
made and hand-
to-hand fights
take place.

Bruschese boldlye one burde, brynyede knyghtes
Owt of botes one burde was buskede with stonyys,

Bett downe of þe beste, brystis the hetches ;

3684 Som gomys thourghe gyrde with gaddys of yryne,

The archers of
England make
havoc among the
heathen knights.

Comys gayliche clede englaymous wapene !

Archers of Inglande fulle egerly schottes,

Hittis thourghe þe harde stele fulle hertly dynntis !

3688 Sonne hotchene in holle the hejenne knyghtes,

Hurte thourghe þe harde stele, hele they never !

Than they falle to þe fyghte, ffoynes with sperys,

Alle the frekkest one frownte þat to þe fyghte langes ;

3692 And ilkone frechely fraystez theire strenghes,

Were to fyghte in þe flete with theire felle wapyne :
 Thus they dalte þat daye thire dubbide knyghtes,
 Tille alle þe Danes ware dede, and in þe depe throwene !

3696 Than Bretones brothely with brondis they hewene, The Dances of
Modred's fleet
are all slain.
 Lepys in up one lofte lordeliche berynes ;
 When ledys of owt londys leppyne in waters,
 Alle oure lordes one lowde laughene at ones !

3700 Be thane speris whare sproningene, spalddyd chippys,
 Spanyolis spedily spretyde over burdez ; Arthur's lords
laugh to see them
leap into the
water.
 Alle þe kene mene of kampe, knyghtes and oþer,
 Killyd are colde dede, and castyne over burdez !

3704 Theire swyers sweyftly has þe swete levyde,
 Heþene hevande on hatche in þer hawe ryses,
 Synkande in þe salte see sevene hundrethe at ones !

3708 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude he has þe gree wonnene,
 And alle þe cogges grete he gafe to his knyghtes, Sir Gawaine dis-
tributes the ships
among his
knights.
 Sir Geryne, and *syr* Grisswolde, and oþir gret lordes ;
 Garte Galuth a gud gome girde of þaire hedys !

Thus of þe false flete appone þe flode happenede,
 3712 And thus þeis feryne folke fey are belevede !

ȝitt es þe traytour one londe with tryede knyghttes,
 And alle trompede they trippe one trappede stedys ;
 Schewes theme undir schilde one þe schire bankkes ; But Modred the
traitor has a land
army of tried
knights.

3716 He ne schownttes for no schame, bot schewes fulle heghe !
 Sir Arthure and Gawayne avyede theme bothene
 To sixty thosandez of mene, þat in theire fyghte hovede ;
 Be this the folke was fellyde, thane was þe flode passede ;

3720 Thane was it slyke a slowde in slakkes fulle hugge,
 That let þe kyng for to lande, and the lawe watyre ;
 ffor-thy he lengede one laye for lesynng of horsesys,
 To loke of his lege mene, and of his lele knyghtes, Arthur's host
wait for the tide
to make before
they land.

3724 ȝif any ware lamede or loste, life ȝife they scholde.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne þe gude a galaye he takys, Sir Gawaine
wades ashore.
 And glides up at a gole with gud mene of armes ;
 Whene he growndide for grefe, he gyrdis in þe watere,

3728 That to þe girdyll he gos in alle his gylte wedys :

Schottis upe appone þe sonde in syghte of þe lordes,
 Sengly with hys soppe, my sorowe es the more !
 With baners of his bagys beste of his armes,

3732 He braydes up-on the banke in his bryghte wedys ;
 He byddys his baneoure, “ buske þow belyfe
 To ȝone brode batayle that one ȝone banke hoves ;
 And I ensure ȝow sothe I sall ȝowe sewe aftyre ;

3736 Loke þe blenke for no bronde, ne for no bryghte wapyne,
 Bot beris downe of þe beste and bryng theme o-dawe !
 Bees noghte abayste of theire boste abyde one þe erthe ;
 ȝe have my baneres borne in batailles fulle hugge ;

3740 We sall felle ȝone false, þe fende hafe theire saules !
 ffligtes faste with þe frape, þe felde sall be oures ;
 May I þat traytoure overtake, torfere hymē tyddes,
 That this tresone has tymburde to my trewe lorde !

3744 Of siche a engendure fulle littylle joye happyns,
 And þat sall in this journee be juggede fulle evene !”
 Now they seke over þe sonde þis soppe at þe gaynest,
 Sembls one þe sowdeours, and settys theire dyntys ;

3748 Thourgh þe scheldys so schene schalkes þey towche,
 With schaf tes scheveride schorte of þas schene launces ;
 Derfe dyntys they dalte with daggande sperys ;
 One þe danke of þe dewe many dede lyggys,

3752 Dukes, and duszoperis, and dubbide knyghttys ;
 The doughtyeste of Danemarke undone are for ever !
 Thus thas renkes in rewthe rittis theire brenyes,
 And rechis of þe richeste unrekene dynttis ;

3756 They slay three hundred of the bravest.
 3756 Thare they thronge in the thikke, and thristis to þe erthe
 Of the thraeste mene thre hundrethe at ones !
 Bot syr Gawayne for grefe myghte noghte agayne-stande,
 Umbegrippys a spere, and to a gome rynnys,

3760 þat bare of gowles fulle gaye, with gowees of sylvere ;
 He gyrdes hym in at þe gorge with his gryme¹ launce,
 þat þe growndene glayfe graythes in sondyre !

Sir Gawaine kills
 the king of Goth-
 land.

¹ grown erased from the text and gryme written in margin.

With þat boystous brayde he bownes hym to dye !

3764 The kyng^e of Gutlande it was, a gude mane of armes.

Thayre avawwarde than alle voydes þare aftyre,

The vanguard of
the army flies.

Alles venqueste verrayely with valyant berynes ;

Metis with medilwarde, that Modrede ledys !

3768 Oure mene merkes theme to, as theme myshappenede—

ffor hade *syr* Gawayne hade gracie to halde þe grene hillie,

He had wirchipe i-wys wonnene for ever !

Gawaine rashly
advances against
the centre, where
Modred is with
the Montagus and
other great lords.

Bot þane *syr* Gawayne i-wysse, he waytes hym wele

3772 To wreke hym on this werlaughe, þat þis werre moveode ;

And merkes to *syr* Modredre amonge alle his beryns,

With the Mownttagus, and oþer gret lordys.

þan *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and with a gret wylle

3776 ffewters a faire spere, and freshely askryses,—

“ ffals fosterde foode, the fende have thy bonyss !

ffy one the, felonie, and thy false werkys !

Thow sall^e be dede and undone for thy derfe dedys,

3780 Or I sall^e dy this daye, þif destanye worthe !”

Gawaine puts a
fresh spear in
rest, and assails
Modred with re-
proaches.

Than^e his enmye, with oste of owtlawede berynes,

Alle enangyll^{es} abowte oure excellente knyghttez,

That the traytoure be tresone had tryede hym selvene ;

3784 Dukes of Danemarke he dyghttes fulle sone,

And leders of Lettowe, with legyons inewe,

Umbylappyde oure mene with launcez fulle kene,

Sowdeours and Sarazenes owte of sere landys,

3788 Sexty thosande mene semlyly arrayede,

Sekerly assembles thare one sevenschore knyghtes,

Sodaynly in dischayte by tha salte strandes.

Thane *syr* Gawayne grette with his gray eghene,

3792 ffor grefe of his gud mene that he gyde schulde ;

He wyste that thay wondyde ware, and wery for-
foughtene,

And what for wondire and woo, alle his witte faylede.

And thane syghande he saide, with sylande terys,—

3796 “ We are with Sarazenes be-sett appone sere halfes !

I syghe noghte for myselfe, sa helpe oure Lorde ;

The host of the
enemy, number-
ing sixty thou-
sand men, sur-
round Gawaine
and his little
band.

Gawaine weeps
and laments for
the danger of his
men.

Bot for to us supprysede, my sorowe es the more.

Bes dowghtty to-daye, þone dukes schalle be þoures !

3800 ffor dere Dryghttyne this daye dredys no wapyne.

He comforts them with promises of blessings in Heaven.

We sallende this daye alles excellent knyghttes,

Ayere to endelesse joye with angelles unwemmyde.

þoþe we haþe unwittily wastede oure selfene,

3804 We sallende wirke alle wele in þe wirchipe of Cryste.

We sallende for þone Sarazenes, I sekire þow my trowhe,

Souuppe with oure Saveoure solemnly in hevene,

In presence of þat precious prynce of alle oþer

They shall sup with prophets, patriarchs, and apostles.

3808 With prophetes, and patriarkes, and apostlys fulle nobille,

Be-fore his freliche face that fourmede us alle !

Perish the base slave that yields !

þondire to þone þaldsones, he þat þeldes hym ever,

Qwhylles he es qwykke and in qwerte unquellyde with handis ;

Then Gawaine grimly grips his weapon,

3812 Be he never mo savede, ne socourede with Cryste,

Bot Satanase his sawle mowe synke in-to helle !"

Than grymly *syr* Gawayne gryppis hys wapyne,

and rushes into the fray.

T Agayne þat gret bataille he graythes hym sone ;

3816 Radly of his riche swerde he reghettes þe cheynys,

In he schokkes his schelde, schountes he no lengare ;

Bot alles unwyse wodewyse he wente at þe gaynestes,

Wondis of thas wadirwyns with wrakfulle dynttys,

3820 Alle wellys fulle of blode, thare he awaye passes ;

And þoþe hym ware fulle woo, he wondys bot lyttile,

Bot wrekys at his wirchipe þe wrethe of hys lorde !

He stekys stedis in stoure, and sterenefull knyghttes,

3824 That sterynemene in theire sterapes stone dede þay lygge !

He rybys þe ranke stele, he rittes þe mayles ;

Thare myghte no renke hym areste, his reson was
passede !

He performs mighty deeds of arms.

He felle in a fransye for fersenesse of herte,

3828 He feughtis and fellis downe þat hym be-fore standis !

ffelle never fay mane siche fortune in erthe !

Into þe hale bataille hedlynge he rynnys,

And hurtes of þe hardieste þat one the erthe lenges !

He fights like a madman.

3832 Letande alles a lyone, he lawnches theme thorowe,
 Lordes and ledars, that one the launde hoves !
 ȝit *syr* Gawayne for wo wondis bot lyttile,
 Bot woundis of thas wedirwynes with wondirfull dyntes,

3836 Alls he þat wold wilfully wastene hym selfene ;
 And for wondsome and wille alle his wit failede,
 That wode alles a wylde beste he wente at þe gayneste ; Like a wild beast
he goes on wallowing in blood.
 Alle walewede one blode, thare he awaye passede ;

3840 Iche a wy may be-warre, be wreke of anoþer !

Than he moves to *syr* Modrede amange alle his knyghttes,
 And mett hym in þe myde schelde, and mallis hym
 thorowe ;
 Bot the schalke for the scharpe he schownttes a littile,

3844 He schare hym one þe schorte rybbys a schaftmonde He wounds Modred in the side.
 large !
 The schafte schoderede and schotte in the schire beryne,
 þat the schadande blode over his schanke rynnys,
 And schewede one hischynbawde, þat wasschire burneste !

3848 And so they schyfte and schove, he schotte to þe erthe ; Modred falls to the earth.
 With þe lussche of þe launce he lyghte one hys schuldrys,
 Ane akere lenghe one a launde, fulle lothely wondide.

Than Gawayne gyrde to þe gome, and one þe groffe fallis ; Gawaine strives to finish him with a dagger, but misses his blow.

3852 Alles his grefe was graythede, his grace was no bettyre !
 He schokkes owtte a schorte knyfe schethede with silvere,
 And scholde have slottede hym in, bot no slytte
 happenede :

His hand slepid and slode o-slante one þe mayles,

3856 And þe toþer sleyly slynges hym undire :
 With a trenchande knyfe the traytoure hym hyttes,
 Thorowe þe helme and þe hede, one heyghe one þe brayne : Modred, with a sharp dagger, stabs Gawaine through the brain.
 And thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, the gude man of armes,

3860 With-owtynne reschewe of renke, and rewghe es þe more !
 Thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, that gyede many othire ; Gawaine, the good man of arms, is gone !
 fro Gowere to Gernesay, alle þe gret lordys
 Of Glamour, of Galys londe, þis galyarde knyghtes,

3864 ffor glent of gloppynng glade be they never !

King Frederick
asks who he was.

Kyng ffroderike offres fraythely þare aftyre,
ffraynes at the false mane of owre ferse knyghte;

"Knew thow ever this knyghte in thi kithe ryche,

3868 Of whate kynde he was comene, be-knowe now þe sothe ;
Qwat gome was he this with the gaye armes,
With þis gryffoune of golde, þat es one growffe fallyne ;
He has grettly greffede us, sa me Gode helpē !

3872 Gyrde downe oure gude mene, and grevede us sore !
He was þe sterynneste in stoure that ever stele werryde,
ffore he has stonayede oure stale, and stroyede for ever!"

Modred tells
him that he was
Sir Gawayne the
good, the merri-
est, the kindest,
and the bravest
of knights !

3876 Than *syr* Mordred with mouthe melis fulle faire ;

"He was makles one molde, mane be my trowhe ;
This was *syr* Gawayne the gude, þe gladdeste of othire,
And the graciuouseste gome that undire God lyffede,
Mane hardyeste of hande, happyeste in armes,
3880 And the hendeste in hawle undire hevene riche ;
þe lordelieste of ledyngē qwhylls he lyffe myghte,
ffore he was lyone allossen in londes i-newe ;
Had thow knawene hym, *syr* kynge in kythe thare he
lengede,

3884 His konyng, his knyghthode, his kyndly werkes,
His doyng, his doughtynesse, his dedis of armes,
Thow wolde hafe dole for his dede þe dayes of thy life!"

Modred weeps
for the fate of
Gawaine.

3888 ȝit þat traytour alles tite teris lete he falle,
Turnes hym furthe tite, and talkes no more,
Went wepan awaye and weries the stowndys,
þat ever his werdes ware wroghte siche wandrethe to
wyrke :

Whene he thoghte on þis thynge, it thirllede his herte ;
3892 ffor sake of his sybb blode sygheande he rydys ;
When þat renayede renke remembirde hym selvene,
Of reverence and ryotes of þe rownde table.

He repents of his
wickedness and
retreats,

3896 He rennyd and repent hymē of alle his rewthe werkes,
Rode awaye with his rowte, ristys he no lengere,
ffor rade of oure riche kynge, ryve þat he scholde ;
Thane kayres he to Cornewaile, carefullē in herte,

Because of his kynsemene that one the coste ligges : goes into Corn-wall,

3900 He taries tremlande ay, tydandis to herken_e.
 Than the traytoure treunted þe Tyseday þar-aftyre,
 Trynnys in with a trayne tresone to wirke,
 And by þe Tambire þat tide his tentis he reris,
 3904 And thane in a mette-while a messangere he sendes,
 And wraite un-to Waynor how the werlde chaungede,
 And what comliche coste the kyng was aryvede,
 One floode foughtene with his fleete, and fellyd them_e
 olyfe ; and pitches his camp by the Tamar.

3908 Bade hir ferken_e so ferre, and ffee with hir childire,
 Whills he myghte wile hym_e awaye, and wyne to hir
 speche,
 Ayere in-to Irelande, in-to þas owte mowntes, bidding her fly
 And wonne thare in wildernesse with-in tha wast landys ; into Ireland.

3912 Than cho þermys and ȝee at ȝorke in hir chambire,
 Gronys fulle gryssely with gretand teres,
 Passes owte of þe palesse with alle hir price maydenys,
 Towarde Chestyre in a charre thay chese hir þe wayes,
 3918 Dighte hir ewyne for to dye with dule at hir herte ;
 Scho kayres to Karelyone, and kawghte hir a vaile,
 Askes thare þe habite in þe honoure of Criste,
 And alle for falsede, and frawde, and fere of hir loverde ! But she goes to
 3920 Bot whene oure wiese kyng_e wiste þat Gawayne was
 landede, Caerleon and takes the veil.

He al to-wrythes for woo, and wryngande his handes,
 Gers lawnche his botes appone a lawe watire,
 Londis als a lyone with lordliche knyghtes,
 3924 Slippes in in the sloppes o-slante to þe girdylle,
 Swalters upe swyftly with his swerde drawene,
 Bownys his bataile and baners displayes,
 Buskes over þe brode sandes with breth at his herte,
 3928 fferkes frekkly one felde þare þe feye lygges ; Arthur is grieved
 Of the traytours mene one trappede stedis,
 Ten thosandez ware tynte, þe trewghe to acownt,
 And certane on owre syde sevene score knyghtes for Gawayne's
 rash landing, and follows him
 wading through the water.

He slays ten
 thousand men in
 his great wrath.
 Seven score of
 his knights are
 slain.

3932 In soyte with theire soverayne unsownde are belevede !

Arthur slays
dukes and earls,

The kynge comly over-kesté knyghtes and othire,

TErles of Awfrike, and estriche berynes

Of Orgaile and Orekenay, þe Iresche kynges,

3936 The nobileste of Norwaiye, nowmbirs fulle hugge,

Dukes of Danamarke, and dubbid knyghtes ;

And the enchede kynge in the gay armes

Lys gronande one þe grownnde, and girde thorowe evene !

and makes his
way to where Ga-
waine's men are
surrounded,

3940 The riche kynge ransakes with rewthe at his herte,

And up rypes the renkes of alle þe rownde tabyllle ;

Ses theme alle in a soppe in sowte by theme one,

With þe Sarazenes unsownde enserchede abowte ;

3944 And *syr* Gawayne the gude in his gaye armes,

Umbegrippede the girse, and one grouffe fallene,

His baners braydene downe, betyne of gowlles,

His brand and his brade schelde al blody be-rovene ;

3948 Was never oure semliche kynge so sorowfullē in herte,

Ne þat sanke hym so sade, bot þat sighte one.

Than gliftis þe gud kynge, and glapyns in herte,

Thronys fulle grisely with gretande teris ;

3952 Knelis downe to the cors, and caught it in armes,

Kastys upe his umbrere, and kysses hymē sone !

Lokes one his eye-liddis, þat lowkkide ware faire,

His lippis like to þe lede, and his lire falowede !

3956 þan the corownde kyng cryes fulle lowde,—

“ Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede !

ffor nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide !

Here es þe hope of my hele, my happyng of armes !

3960 My herte and my hardynes hale one hym lengede !

My concelle, my comforthe, þat kepide myne herte !

Of alle knyghtes þe kynge þat undir Criste lifede !

þou was worthy to be kynge, thofe I þe corowne bare !

3964 My wele and my wirchipe of alle þis werlde riche

Was wonnene thourgh *syr* Gawayne, and thourgh his

witte one !

Allas !” saide *syr* Arthure, “ nowe ekys my sorowe !

With groans and
tears he kisses
the body.

He bitterly la-
ments the good
knight.

It was through
his wit that all
his conquests
were made.

I am uttirly undone in myne awene landes !

3968 A dowttouse derfe dede, þou duellis to longe !

Why drawes þou so one dredhe, thow drownnes myne herte !”

Than swetes the swete kynge and in swoune fallis,
Swafres up swiftely, and swetly hym kysses,

Arthur swoons for grief; then starts up and kisses the dead knight.

3972 Tille his burliche berde was blydy be-rowne,
Alls he had bestes britenede, and broghte owt of life ;
Ne had *syr* Ewayne comene, and othire grete lordys,
His bolde herte had broustene for bale at þat stownde !

3976 “**B**lyve,” sais thies bolde mene ! “thow blondirs þi selfene,

Sir Ewaine and his knights reproach him.

þis es botles bale, for bettir bees it never !

It es no wirchipe i-wysse to wryng thyne hondes,
To wepe als a womane it es no witt holdene !

3980 Be knyghtly of contenaunce, als a kyng scholde,
And leve siche clamoure for Cristes lufe of hevene !”

“ffor blode,” said the bolde kynge, “ blyne sall I never,
Or my brayne to-briste, or my breste oþer !

He excuses himself on account of the greatness of the grief.

3984 Was never sorowe so softe that sanke to my herte !
Itt es fulle sibb to myselfe, my sorowe es the more !

Was never so sorrowfull a syghte seyne with myne eghene !
He es sakles supprysede for syne of myne one !”

3988 Downe knelis þe kynge, and kryes fulle lowde ;
With carefull contenaunce he karpes thes wordes,—
“ O rightwis riche Gode, this rewthe thow be-holde !
þis ryalle rede blode ryne appone erthe ;

3992 It ware worthy to be schrede and schrynede in golde,
ffor it es sakles of syne, sa helpe me oure Lorde !”

Downe knelis þe kyng with kare at his herte,
Kaughte it upe kyndly with his clene handis,

He collects Gawayne's blood in a helmet,

3996 Keste it in a ketille-hatte, and coverde it faire,
And kayres furthe with þe cors in kyghte þare he lenges.

and carries away his body.

“**H**ere I make myn avowe,” quod the kynge thane,
“ To Messie, and to Marie, the mylde qwene of hevene,

Then he makes a solemn vow that he will take no pleasure in the chase till Gawaine be avenged.

4000 I sall never ryvaye, ne racches un-cowpylle
 At roo ne rayne dere, þat rynnes apponne erthe ;
 Never grewhownde late glyde, ne gossehawke latt flye,
 Ne never fowle see fellide, þat flieghes with wenge ;

4004 ffawkone ne formaylle appone fiste handille,
 Ne ȝitt with gerefawcone rejoysse me in erthe ;
 Ne regnne in my royaltez, ne halde my rownde table,
 Tille thi dede, my dere, be dewly revengede !

4008 Bot ever droupe and dare, qwyllies my lyfe lastez,
 Tille Drightene and derfe dede hafe done qwate them^e
 likes !”

Than caughte they upe þe cors with kare at theire hertes,
 Karyed [it] one a coursere with þe kynge selfene ;

The body was sent straight to Winchester,
 and met by a procession of monks.

4012 The waye unto Wynchestre þay wente at the gaynest,
 Wery and wandsomly, with wondide knyghtes ;
 Thare come þe prior of the plas, and professide monnkes,
 Apas in processione, and with the prynce metys ;

4016 And he be-tuke þame the cors of þe knyghte noble,—
 “ Lokis it be clenly kepyd,” he said, “ and in þe kirke
 holdene,
 Done for derygese, as to þe ded fallys ;
 Menskede with messes, for mede of þe saule :

4020 Loke it wante no waxe, ne no wirchipe elles,
 And at þe body be bawmede, and one erthe holdene.
 ȝiff thou kepe thi covent, encroche any wirchipe
 At my comyng agayne, ȝif Crist wille it thole ;

4024 Abyde of þe beryenge tille they be broughte undire,
 þat has wroughte us this woo, and þis werre movede.”

Sir Wycher advises that he should stay in Winchester and rally his forces.

4028 Than sais *syr* Wychere þe wy, a wyese mane of armes,
 “ I rede ȝe warely wende, and wirkes the beste ;

4032 Soiorne in this cete, and semble thi berynes,
 And bidde with thi bolde mene in thi burghe riche :
 Get owt knyghtez of contres, that castelles holdes,
 And owt of garysons grete gude mene of armes,
 ffor we are faithely to fewe to feghte with them alle,
 þat we see in his sorte appone þe see bankes.”

With krewelle contenance thane the kyng karpis theis
wordes,—

“I praye the kare noghte, *syr knyghte*, ne caste þou no
dredis !

4036 Hadde I no segge bot myselfe one undir sone, Arthur declares
And I may hym see with sighte, or one hym sette hondis,
I sall e evene amange his mene malle hym to dede,
Are I of þe stede styre halfe a stede lenghe !

4040 I sall e hym in his stowre, and stroye hym for ever,
And þare-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
And to his modyre Marie, þe mylde qwene of hevene !

4044 In ceté ne in subarbe sette appone erthe, He will never
Ne ȝitt slomyre ne slepe with my slawe eyghne,
Tille he be slayne þat hym slowghe, ȝif any sleyghte
happene :

Bot ever pursue the Payganys þat my pople distroyede,
4048 Qwylls I may pare them and pynne, in place þare me
likes.”

Thare durste no renke hym areste of alle þe rownde table,
Ne none paye þat prynce with plesande wordes,
Ne none of his lige-mene luke hym in the eyghne,

4052 So lordely he lukes for losse of his knyghtes !
Thane drawes he to Dorsett, and dredches no langere,
Derefulle dredlesse with drowppande teris ;

Kayeris in-to Kornewayle with kare at his herte,
4056 The trays of þe traytoure he trynys fulle evenne :

And turnys in be þe Treynte¹ þe traytoure to seche,
ffyndis hym in a foreste þe Frydaye there aftire ;
The kyng lyghttes one fott, and freshely askryes,

4060 And with his freliche folke he has þe folde nomene !
Now isschewis his enmye undire þe wode eynys,
With ostes of alynes fulle horrebille to schewe !

Sir Mordrede the malebranche, with his myche pople,
4064 ffoundes owt of the foreste appone fele halves,

that he himself
alone is sufficient.

He will never
sojourn in city
or town till Mo-
dred be slain.

None dares to
oppose the fierce
words of Arthur.

Arthur follows
Modred into
Cornwall and at-
tacks him.

A vast host of
aliens assault Ar-
thur's men.

¹ ? Tamar.

In sevene grett batailles semliche arrayede,
 Sexti thowsande mene, the syghte was fulle hugge,
 Alle fyghtande folke of þe ferre laundes,

There were sixty thousand against eighteen hundred.

4068 ffaire fettede one frownte be tha fresche strandes !

And alle Arthurs oste was amede with knyghtes
 Bot awghtene hundrethe of alle, entrede in rolles ;
 This was a mache un-mete, bot myghtis of Criste,

4072 To melle with þat multitude in þase man londis.

Than the royalle roy of þe rownde table

Arthur on a
charger arranges
his men.

Rydes one a riche stedes, arrayes his beryns,
 Buskes his avawmwarde, als hym beste likes ;

4076 Syr Ewayne, and *syr* Errake, and othire gret lordes,

Demenys the medilwarde menskefully thare aftyre,
 With Merrake and Menyduke, myghty of strenghes ;
 Idirous and Alymere, þire avenaunt childrene,

4080 Ayers with Arthure, with sevne score of knyghtes ;

He rewlis þe rerewarde redyly thare aftyre,
 The rekeneste redy mene of þe rownde table,
 And thus he fittis his folke, and freschely askryes,

4084 And syne comforthes his mene with knyghtlyche
 wordes—

He beseeches
them to do well
that day and not
to fear.

“ I beseke þow, sirs, for sake of oure Lorde,
 That þe doo wele to daye, and dredis no wapene !
 ffighttes fersely nowe, and fendis þoure selvene,

4088 ffellis downe þone feye folke, the felde sall be otrs !

They are Sarazenes þone sorte, un-sownde motte they
 worthe !

Sett one theme sadlye, for sake of oure Lorde !

þif us be destaynede to dy to daye one this erthe,

4092 We sall be hewede un-to hevene, or we be halfe colde !

Loke þe lett for no lede lordly to wirche ;

Layes þone laddes lowe be the layke ende !

Take no tente un-to me, ne tale of me rekke,

4096 Bes besy one my baners with þoure brighte wapyns,

That they be strenghely stuffede with steryne knyghtes,
 And holdene lordly one lofte ledys to schewe ;

{if any renke theme arase, reschowe theme sone.

4100 Wirkes now my wirchipe, to daye my werre endys !
 Je wotte my wele and my wo, wirkkys as ȝow likys !
 Crist comly with crowne comforthe ȝow alle,
 ffor þe kyndeste creatours that ever kynge ledde !

To-day his war ends !

4104 I gyffe ȝow alle my blyssyng with a blithe wille,
 And alle Bretowns bolde, blythe mote þe worthe !”
 They pype up at pryme tyme approches theme nere,
 Pris mene and priste proves their strenghes ;

He gives them his parting blessing.

4108 Bremly the brethemen bragges in troumppes,
 In cornettes comlyly, whene knyghttes assembles,
 And thane jolyly enjoynys þeis jentylle knyghttes ;
 A jolyere journé a-juggedede was never,

4112 Whene Bretones boldly embraces theire scheldes,
 And cristyne encroyssede theme, and castis in fewtire !

The Britons fight furiously.

T than *syr* Arthure oste his enmye askryes,
 And in they schokke theire scheldes, schontes no
 lengare ;

4116 Schotte to þe schiltrones, and schowttes fulle heghe,
 Thorowe scheldis fulle schene schalkes they touche !
 Redily thus rydde mene of the rownde table
 With ryalle raunke stele rittys theire mayles ;

4120 Bryneys browddene they briste, and burneste helmys,
 Hewes haythene mene downe, halses in sondre !
 ffyghtande with fyne stele, þe feye blod rynnys
 Of þe frekkestes of frounte, unfers ere be-levede.

4124 Ethyns of Argayle and Irische kynges
 Enverounes oure avawmwarde with venymmos beryns ;
 Peghlettes and paynymes with perilous wapyns,
 With speres disspetously dissppoylles our knyghttes,
 4128 And hewede downe the hendeste with hertly dynttys !
 Thorow the holle batayle they holdene theire wayes ;
 þus fersly they fyghte appone sere halfes,
 That of þe bolde Bretones myche blode spillis !

The vanguard is surrounded by the enemy, and many of them slain.

4132 Thare durste non rescowe theme, for reches in erthe,
 þe steryne ware þare so stedde, and stuffede wit othire :

He durste noghte stire a steppe, bot stodde for hym^e
selvene,

Tille thre stalis ware stroyede be strenghe of hym^e one !

4136 "Idrous," *quod* Arthure, "ayre the byhoves !

Arthur bids Sir
Idrus rescue his
father, Sir
Ewaine.

I see *syr* Ewayne over-sette with Sarazenes kene !
Redy the for rescows, arraye thee sone !

Hye þe with hardy mene in helpe of thy ffadire !

4140 Sett in one the syde, and socoure ȝone lordes ;
Bot they be socourrede and sownde, unsawghte be I
never !"

Idrous hym^e ansuers ernestly þare aftyre,—

"He es my fadire in faithe, for-sake sall^e I never !

4144 He has me fosterde and fedde, and my faire bretherene,
Bot I for-sake this gate, so me Gode helpe,
And sothely alle sybredyne bot thyselfe one ;
I breke never his biddynge for beryne one lyfe,

4148 Bot ever bouxome as beste blethely to wyrke !

He commande me kyndly, with knyghtly wordes,

That I schulde lelely one þe lenge, and one noo lede elles ;
I sall^e hys commandement holde, ȝif Criste wil me thole !

4152 He es eldare than I, and ende sall^e we bothene ;

He sall^e ferke be-fore, and I sall^e come aftyre :

ȝiffe hym^e be destaynede to dy to daye one þis erthe,
Criste comly with crowne take kepe to hys saule !"

4156 **T**han remys the riche kyng^e with rewthe at his herte,
Hewys hys handys on heghte, and to þe hevene lokes,—

"Qwythene had Dryghtyne destaynede at his dere wille,
þat he hade demyd me to daye to dy for ȝow alle,

4160 That had I lever than be lorde alle my lyfe tyme,
Off alle þat Alexandere aughte qwhilles he in erthe
lengede."

Arthur wishes
that he might die
instead of his
knights.

Sir Ewayne and *syr* Errake, þes excellente beryns,

Enters in one þe oste, and egerly strykes ;

4164 The ethenys of Orkkenaye and Irische kynges,
þay gobone of þe gretteste with growndone swerdes,
Hewes one þas hulkes with þeire harde wapyns,

Sir Ewaine and
Sir Errard per-
form great deeds
of valour before
they are over-
powered and
slain.

Layed downe þas ledes with lothely dynntys ;
 4168 Schuldirs and scheldys þay schrede to þe hawnches,
 And medilles thourgh mayles, þay merkene in sondire !
 Siche honoure never aughte none erthely kyng
 At theire endyng daye, bot Arthure hym selfe !

4172 So þe droughte of þe daye dryede theire hertes,
 That bothe drynkles they dye, dole was þe more !
 Now mellys oure medille-warde, and mengene to-gedire.
 Sir Mordred þe Malebranche with his myche pople,

4176 He had hide hym be-hynde with-in thas holte eynys,
 With halle bataile one hethe, harme es þe more !
 He hade sene þe conteke al clene to þe ende,
 How oure chevalrye chevyde be chaunces of armes !

4180 He wiste oure folke was for-foughttene, þat þare was
 feye levede ;
 To encowntere þe kyng he castes hym selfe sone,
 Bot the churles chekyne hade chaungyde his armes ;
 He had sothely for-sakene þe sawturoure engrelede,

4184 And laughte upe thre lyons alle of whitte silvyre,
 Passande in purpre of perrie full ryche,
 ffor þe kyng sulde noghte knawe þe cawtelous wriche !
 Because of his cowardys he keste of his atyre ;

4188 Bot the comliche kyng knewe hym full swythe,
 Karpis to *syr* Cadors þes kyndly wordez,—
 “I see the traytoure come ȝondyr trynande full ȝerne ;
 ȝone ladde with þe lyones es like to hym selfene !

4192 Hym sall torfere betyde, may I touche ones,
 ffor alle his tresone and trayne, alle I am trew lorde !
 To day Clarente and Caliburne sall kythe theme to-gedirs,
 Whilke es kenere of kerse, or hardare of eghge !

4196 ffraiste sall we fyne stele appone fyne wedis :
 Itt was my derlyng dayntevous, and full dere holdene,
 Kepede fore encorownmentes of kynges enoynttede
 One dayes when I dubbyde dukkes and erles ;

4200 It was burliche borne be þe bryghte hiltes ;
 I durste never dere it in dedis of armes,

The centre of Arthur's army engages.

Sir Modred had been watching the battle, and preparing to attack the king.

But first he changes his arms to conceal himself.

But Arthur knows him at once, and points him out to Sir Cador.

The two famous swords, Clarent and Caliburn, shall this day be tried one against the other.

Arthur recognises his sword which he had left at Wallingford under the care of the Queen.

Bot ever kepide clene, be-cause of myselvene ;
 for I see Clarent unclede, þat crowne es of swerde :
 4204 My wardrop of Walyngfordhe I wate es distroyede ;
 Wist no wy of wone bot Waynor hir-selvene,
 Scho hade þe kepynge hirselfe of þat kydde wapyne,
 Off cofres enclosede þat to þe crowne lengede,
 4208 With rynges and relikes, and þe regale of ffraunce,
 That was fflowndene one *syr ffrolle*, whene he was feye
 levyde.”
 Than *syr Marrike* in malyncly metys hyme sone,
 With a mellyd mace myghtly hym strykes ;
 4212 The bordoure of his bacenett he bristes in sondire,
 þat þe schire rede blode over his brene rynnys !
 The beryne blenkes for bale, and alle his ble chaunges,
 Bot ȝitt he byddys as a bore, and brymly he strykes !
 4216 He braydes owte a brande bryghte als ever ony sylver,
 þat was *syr Arthure* awene, and Utere his fadirs,
 In þe wardrop of Walyngfordhe was wonte to be kepede ;
 þare with þe derfe dogge syche dyntes he rechede,
 4220 þe toþer with-drewe one-dreghe and durste do none oþer !
 ffor *syr Marrake* was mane merrede in elde,
 And *syr Mordrede* was myghty, and his moste strenghes ;
 Come none with-in the compas, knyghte ne none oþer,
 4224 With-in þe swyng of swerde, þat ne he þe swete levyd :
 þat persayfes oure prynce, and presses to faste,
 Strykes into þe stowre by strenghe of hys handis ;
 Metis with *syr Mordrede*, he melis unfaire,—
 4228 “ Turne, traytoure untrewe, þe tydys no bettyre ;
 Be gret Gode thow sall dy with dynt of my handys !
 The schalle rescowe no renke ne reches in erthe ! ”
 The kyng with Calaburne knygghtly hym strykes,
 4232 The cantelle of þe clere schelde he kerfes in sondyre,
 In-to þe schuldyre of þe schalke a schaftmonde large,
 þat þe schire rede blode schewede one þe maylys !
 He schodirde and schrenkys, and schontes bott lyttile,
 4236 Bott schokkes in scharpely in his schene wedys ;

Arthur forces his way to Modred,

and upbraids him.

Then he strikes him with Caliburn and cuts through his shield and into the shoulder.

The ffelonne with *þe* ffyne swerde freschely he strykes,
 The ffelettes of *þe* fferre syde he flassches in sondyre,
 Thorowe jopowne and jesserawnte of gentille mailes !

Modred, though wounded, strikes Arthur and gives him a terrible wound in the side.

4240 The freke ficede in *þe* flesche an halfe fotte large,
 That derfe dynt was his dede, and dole was *þe* more
 That ever *þat* doughty sulde dy, bot at Dryghttyns
 wylle !

ȝitt with Calyburne his swerde, fulle knyghtly he strykes,

Arthur with Caliburn cuts off the sword-hand of Modred.

4244 Kastes in his clere schelde, and coveres hym fulle faire ;
 Swappes of *þe* swerde hande, als he by glentis,
 Ane inche fro *þe* elbowe, he ochede it in sondyre,
þat he swounnes one *þe* swrathe, and one swym fallis ;

4248 Thorowe brater of browne stede, and the bryghte mayles,
 That the hilte and *þe* hande appone *þe* hethe ligges !
 Thane frescheliche *þe* freke the ffente upe rererys,
 Brochis hym in with the bronde to *þe* bryghte hiltys,

Modred dies.

4252 And he brawles one the bronde, and bownes to dye.
 "In faye," says *þe* feye kynge, "sore me for-thynkkes
 That ever siche a false theefe so faire an end haves."
 Qwene they had ffenyste *þis* feghte, thane was *þe* felde
 wonnene,

Arthur declares that his end is too good for him.

4256 And the false folke in *þe* felde feye are by-levede !
 Tille a fforeste they fledde, and felle in the grevys,
 And fers fognande folke folowes theme aftyre ;
 Howntes and hewes downe the heytene tykes,

Modred's men are defeated and pursued.

4260 Mourtherys in the mowntaynes *syr* Mordrede knyghtes ;
 Thare chapyde never no childe, cheftayne ne oþer,
 Bot choppes theme downe in the chace, it chargys bot
 littylle !

Bot whene *syr* Arthure anone *syr* Ewayne he fyndys,
 4264 And Errake *þe* avenaunt, and oþer grett lordes,
 He kawghte up *syr* Cador with care at his herte,
 Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremonde, *þes* clere mene of armes,
 Sir Lothe, and *syr* Lyonelle, *syr* Lawncelott and Lowes,
 4268 Marrake and Meneduke, *þat* myghty ware ever ;

Arthur finds the dead bodies of his knights.

With langoure in the launde thare he layes theme to-
gedire,

Lokede one theyre lighames, and with a lowde stevene,
Alles lede þat liste noghte lyfe and loste had his myrthis;

He swoons for sorrow,
4272 Than he stotays for made, and alle his strenghe faylez,

Lokes upe to þe lyfte, and alle his lyre chaunges!

Downne he sweys fulle swythe, and in a swoune fallys!

Upe he coveris one kneys, and kryes fulle oftene,—

and bitterly grieves over his
knights.
4276 “Kyng comly with crowne, in care am I levyde!
Alle my lordchipe lawe in lande es layde undyre!

That me has gyfene gwerdones, be grace of hym selvene,
Mayntenyde my manhede be myghte of theire handes,

4280 Made me manly one molde, and mayster in erthe;

In a tenefull tyme this torfere was rereryde,

That for a traytoure has tynte alle my trewe lordys!

Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,

4284 Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!

I may helplis one hethe house be myne one,

Alles a wafulle wedowe þat wanttes hir beryne!

I may werye and wepe, and wrynges myne handys,

4288 ffor my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!

Off alle lordchips I take leve to myne ende!

Here es þe Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,

And nowe in þis journee alle my joy endys!”

4292 Thane relies þe renkes of alle þe rownde table,

To þe ryalle roy thay ride þam alle;

Than assembles fulle sone sevene score knyghtes,

In sighte to þaire soverayne, þat was unsownde levede;

4296 Than knelis the crownede kynge, and kryes one lowde,—

“I thanke þe, Gode, of thy grace, with a gud wylle;

That gafe us vertue and witt to vencows þis beryns;

And us has grauntede þe gree of theis gret lordes!

4300 He sent us never no schame, ne schenchipe in erthe,

Bot ever þit þe overhande of alle oþer kynges:

We hafe no laysere now þese lordys to seke,

ffor þone laythely ladde me lamede so sore!

All his joy is
ended, and he
would take leave
of life.

The remnants of
his men rally
round him.

He thanks God
for the victory,
and all the glory
which he and his
knights had won.

4304 Graythe us to Glaschenbery, us gaynes none *oper* ; He desires to be taken to Glaston-
Thare we may ryste us *with* roo, and raunsake oure wondys bury.

Of þis dere day werke, þe Dryghttene belovede,
That us has destaynede and demyd to dye in oure awene.”

4308 Thane they holde at his heste hally at ones,
And graythes to Glasschenberye þe gate at þe gayneste ;
Entres þe Ile of Aveloyne, and Arthure he lyghttes, He enters the
Merkes to a manere there, for myghte he no forthire : Isle of Avelon
4312 A surgyne of Salerne enserches his wondes, and is taken to a
The kyng sees be asaye þat sownde beset he never, manor there; for
And sone to his sekire mene he said theis wordes,— he could go no
“ Doo calle me a confessour, with Criste in his armes ; further. A sur-
4316 I wille be howselde in haste, whate happe so be-tyddys ; geon is sent for,
Constantyne my cosyne he sall the corowne bere, but Arthur de-
Alles be-commys hym of kynde, þife Criste willie hym thole ! sires a Confessor.
Beryne, fore my benysone, thowe berye þone lordys,
4320 That in baytaille with brondez are broghte owte of lyfe ; Orders Modred’s
And sythene merke manly to Mordrede childrene, children to be
That they bee sleyghely slayne, and slongene in watyrs ; slain.
Latt no wykkyde wede waxe, ne wrythe one this erthe
4324 I warne fore thy wirchipe, wirke alles I bydde !
I foregyffe alle greffe, for Cristez lufe of hevene ! To Guinever he
þife Waynor hafe wele wroghte, wele hir be-tydde !” wishes that “if
He saide *In manus* with mayne one molde whare he ligges, she has well done
4328 And thus passes his speryt, and spekes he no more ! she may fare
The baronage of Bretayne thane, bechopes and othire, well.”
Graythes theme to Glaschenbery *with* gloppynnande Then he says “In
hertes, Manus,” and his spirit passes away.
To bery thare the bolde kynge, and bryngē to the erthe,
4332 With alle wirchipe and welthe þat any wy scholde.
Throly belles thay rynge, and *Requiem* syngys, The Barons of
Dosse messes and matyns *with* mournande notes : Britain bury Ar-
Relygeous reveste in theire riche copes, thur at Glaston-
4336 Pontyficalles and prelates in precyouse wedys, bury.
Dukes and dusszeparis in theire dule cotes,
Cowntasses knelande and claspande theire handes, Great mourning
was made at his funeral.

Ladys languessande and lowrande to schewe ;
 4340 Alle was buskede in blake, birdes and othire,
 That schewede at the sepulture, with sylande teris ;
 Whas never so sorrowfulle a syghte seene in theire tyme !

This was the end
of Arthur of the
blood of Hector
and of Priamus
of Troy.

Thus endis kyng Arthure, as auctors alegges,
 4344 That was of Ectores blude the kynge sone of Troye,
 And of *syr* Pryamous the prynce praysede in erthe ;
 ffro thythene broghte the Bretons alle his bolde eldyrs
 In-to Bretayne the brode, as þe Bruytte tellys.
 Etc. explicit.

Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus.

Here endes Morte Arthure, writene by Robert of Thorntone.

R. Thornton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen !

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Brayde, *s.* stroke, 3763.

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 Byrre, *s.* noise, rush, 3662.
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 Chullede, *v.* chased, 1444.

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Danke, *s.* moisture, 3751.

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Dawez, *s.* days; 'done of dawez,' taken from day, killed, 2056.

Deesse, *s.* däis, raised part of the hall, 218.

Deffuse, want, scarceness, 256.

Dere, *v.* hurt, injure, 2099, 3249.

Derfe, *adj.* strong, powerful, fierce, 312, 811, 2052, 2653.

Derflyche, *adv.* dreadfully, strongly, 3278.

Derygese, *s.* dirges, 4018.

Dictour, *s.* guardian, 712.

Dischayte, *s.* ambush, 3790.

Disspite, *s.* anger, 3164.

Downkyng, *s.* moisture, 3249.

Drecchede, *v.* delayed, 754, abode, dwelt, 1264.

Dredle, *adv.* certes, assuredly, 1504.

Dreghe, *s.* length, delay, 2916, 3277; 'one-dreghe,' behind.

Dreghe, *v.* suffer, 3438.

Drehely, *adv.* carefully, cautiously, 2028.

Dromowndes, *s.* vessels of war, 3616.

Droupe, *v.* sorrow, 4008.

Drye, or dree, *v.* endure, suffer, 704, 1546.

Dryfande, *v.* driving, 761.

Drynchene or drenschene, *v.* destroy, 761, 816.

Dryssede, *v.* directed, ruled, 46.

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Duttez, *s.* (probably an error for *duntez*, dints, blows) 787.

Dypsens, *s.* expense, 538.

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Ekkene, *v.* eke, increase, 2009.

Elagere, *s.* strength, 2978.

Eldes, *s.* ages, times, 301.

Elfaydes, *s.* elks? 'some kind of animal' (Halliwell), 2288.

Eme, *s.* uncle, 1347.

Enchede, *adj.* fallen, vanquished, 3938.

Encroche, *v.* obtain possession of, 3213.

Endordid, *v.* gilded, made to shine, 199.
"Endore it with yokes of eggs."
—(*Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 37).

Englaymez, *v.* makes slimy or slippery, 1131.

Englaymous, *adj.* covered with slime, sore, envenomed, 3685.

Engowschede, *adj.* swelled, puffed up, 2053.

Engyste, *v.* constrain, 445.

Enkerly, *adv.* eagerly, 507.

Empayrede or enpayrede, *v.* impaired, diminished, 474.

Entamede, *adj.* cut, torn, 1160.

Enveryde, *adj.* inverted, 1694.

Erne, ears, 1086.

Escheffe, *v.* escape, 2301.

Ettelles, *v.* endeavours, claims, undertakes, 520, 554, 3078.

Ewyne or ewene, *adv.* even, 762, 774, 1122, 1293.

Eynes, *s.* thickets, 1283, 1760, 2516.

Fakene, *v.* fettle, set in order, 742.

Falterde, *adj.* hanging in folds, 1092.

Fande, *v.* try, endeavour, take care, 557, 656.

Fange or faunge, holds, seizes, 425, 1005, 1249.

Farlande, *s.* foreland, 880.

Fatthe, *s.* tribute, 425.

Fawcetez, *s.* cups, 205.

Fawe, *adj.* variegated, glancing, 747.

Fawntekyns, *s.* young children, 845.

Fax, *s.* hair, 1078.

Fay or fey, *adj.* dead; 'fay-levede,' left dead, killed, 394, 517, 978.

Fele, *adj.* many, 845, 2162.

Feeletez, *s.* fillets, the flesh on the ribs, 1158, 2174.

Felle, *s.* skin, 1081.

Felschen, *v.* freshen, 1975.

Feraunt, *adj.* pleasant, good, 1811.

Fere, *adj.* whole, sound, unhurt, 2795, 3018.

Ferkes, *v.* hastens, goes, 933, 984, 1452.

Ferly, *s.* wonder, 2948.

Ferlyche, *adj.* wonderful, 925.

Fermysone, *s.* the closed time for hunting, also the enclosed and fatted deer as opposed to wild (?), 180.

Ferrers, *adj.* with iron hoops, 2715.

Ferrome, *adj.* foreign, strange, 3579; 'o ferrome,' afar, at a distance, 857.

Ferynne, *s.* far part, the other side, 1875.

Fette, *v.* fetch, 557.

Fewle, *s.* foil, sword, 2071.

Fewtyre, *s.* the rest which sup-

ported the spear, 1366; 'castys in fewtyre,' lays his spear in rest.

Feyed, *v.* mutilated, tore, 1114.

Feyne, *v.* relax, cease, 1147.

Fichene, *v.* pierce, 2098.

Filsuez, *v.* dwells, 881.

Filterde, *adj.* mixed, joined, 780; matted, 1078.

Firthe or frithe, *s.* wood, 1708.

Flay, *v.* terrify, 2441, 2780.

Flayre, *s.* smell, odour, breath, 772.

Fleche, *s.* part, division, 2482.

Flecte, *v.* float, swim, 803.

Flemyde, *v.* burnt, consumed, 1155.

Fleryande, *adj.* grinning, 1088.

Fleterede, *adj.* flitting, flying, 2097.

Flitt, *v.* strike, wound, 2097.

Floneȝ, *s.* arrows, 2097.

Floyne or floygene, *s.* a sort of ship, 743.

Fluke, *s.* flat-fish, 1088; floke-mouthed, 2780.

Flyschande, *adj.* piercing, sharp, 2141, 2769.

Foddenid, *v.* fed, produced, 3247.

Fome, *s.* foam, smoke, 1079.

Fonde, *adj.* foolish, mad, savage, 881.

Fonde or fonode, *v.* try, taste, 147, 366, 3371, 3372.

Fongede, *v.* took hold of, 3309.

Foode or fode, *s.* fellow, 3777.

Fore-lytenede, *v.* decreased, 254.

Fore-maglede, *v.* engaged, hardly pressed, 1534.

Fore-thy, *adv.* wherefore, 225.

For-justede, *adj.* vanquished in fight, 2134, 2896.

Formaylle, *s.* the female hawk, 4004.

Forrayse, *v.* forays, lays waste, 1247.

Forsey, forsoey, or forsey, *adj.* of great force, 3301, 3308.

For-wondsome, *adj.* very sorrowful, 3837.

Fosterde, *s.* foresters, 300.

Forthire, *adv.* forward, 300; 'the forthire,' the forward or, first part.

Foulde, *s.* earth, 1071.

Foundez, *v.* goes, advances, 1228.

Fourtedele, *v.* fourth part, 946.

Foyle, *s.* box, 2705.

Fraisez, *v.* questions, examines, (perhaps) tortures, 1248.

Fraiste, *v.* try, prove, seek, 435, 1038, 3583.

Fraknede, *adj.* freckled, spotted, 681, 1081.

Frawnke, *s.* enclosure, 3248.

Frayne or fraine, *v.* ask, enquire, 337, 1441.

Fraythely, *adv.* suddenly, at once, 3865.

Freke, *s.* man, fellow, wretch, 557, 742, 973.

Frekke, *adj.* bold, eager, vigorous, 3303.

Frekkly, *adv.* boldly, rapidly, 556, 788.

Fremely, *adv.* as a stranger, 1250, 3406.

Fremmede, *adj.* strange, unkind, 3344.

Fresone, *s.* Freisland horse, 1365.

Fretyne or fretene, *adj.* consumed, 844; overlaid, 2142.

Fritched, *adj.* arranged in hedges, 3248.

Fromonde, *s.* forehead, 1112.

Froske, *s.* frog, 1081.

Froyt, *s.* fruit, 2708.

Frumentee, *s.* a dish of wheat, milk, plums, etc., 180 (v. *Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 7).

Frusche, *s.* sudden rush, 2901.

Fruschene, *v.* strife, rout, 2805.

Frythes, *v.* spare, 656, 1734.

Fulsomeste, *adj.* foulest, 1061.

Furthe, *s.* journey, course, 1525; path, roadway, 1897, 2144.

Fylede, *adj.* defiled, 978.

Gaddes, *s.* goads, spears, 3622.

Galede, *v.* screamed, chattered, 927.

Galte, *s.* pig, boar, 1101.

Gardwynes, *s.* rewards, 1729.

Garett, *s.* watch-tower, 562, 3105.

Gaynest, *adj.* nearest, 487.

Gayspande, *v.* gasping, 1462.

Gedlynges or gadlynges, *s.* useless fellows, wretches, 2885.

Geéné, *s.* genies or spirits, 559.

Gerse, *s.* grasp, 3945.

Gersoms, *s.* guerdons, rewards, 165.

Gerte (gers, gars, garte), *v.* caused, made, 1780, 3710.

Gettlesse, *adj.* empty, possessionless, 2728.

Ghywes, *s.* gyves, fetters, 3622.

Glapyns, *v.* is frightened, 3950.

Glaverande, *adj.* deceitful, treacherous, 2538.

Glayfe or glaive, *s.* the blade or steel part of the spear, 3762.

Gledys, *s.* sparks, 117.

Glent, *s.* glance, 3864.

Gliftes, *v.* looks, 3950.

Glopned, *v.* was astonished, frightened, 1074, 2580.

Glopynnyng, *s.* astonishment, 3864.

Gloredē, *v.* glared, stared, 1074.
 Gobbedē or gabbedē, *adj.* deceitful, 1346.
 Gobelets, *s.* part of the armour for the legs, 913.
 Gobone, ? govone, *v.* gave, 4165.
 Gole, *s.* small creek, 3726.
 Gome, *s.* man, 85, etc.
 Gose, *imp.* of go; 'gose over,' recount, 1266.
 Gowces, *s.* the pieces of armour to protect the arm-pits, 3760.
 Gowke, *s.* cuckoo, 927.
 Grame, *s.* anger, grief, 1077, 3009.
 Granes, *v.* groans, 2562.
 Grape, *v.* feel, meditate, 2726.
 Grassede, *v.* decked, furnished, 1091.
 Graynes, *s.* red colour, 3464.
 Graythide, *v.* gathered, arrayed, 373, 589, 602.
 Grayvez, *s.* grieves, steel boots, 913, 2272.
 Grees, *s.* season allotted for sporting, 658.
 Grette, *v.* greeted, 84.
 Gretande, *v.* crying, weeping, 951.
 Grevedē, *v.* snarled, gnashed his teeth, 1075.
 Grevez or grefes, *s.* groves, 927, 1874, 2282.
 Groffe, *s.* face, 3851. In O.E. 'groveling,' face downwards.
 Grucchande, *adj.* grumbling, 1076.
 Grygynge, *s.* 2510.
 Grylych or gryslyche, *adj.* horrible, 1101.
 Grythgide, *v.* vexed, 2557.
 Gumbaldes, *s.* dishes of pastry, 2964.
 Gye, *v.* direct, walk aright, 4.
 Halfes, *s.* parts, sides, 441; 'sere halfes,' several sides.
 Hally, *adv.* wholly, 1085.
 Halse;, *s.* necks, throats, and so heads, 1798.
 Harlotte, *s.* common soldier, low fellow, 2446.
 Harawnte, *v.* march, advance, 2449.
 Harske, *adj.* rough, harsh, 1084.
 Hathelle, *adj.* noble, great, 358, 988.
 Haylede, *v.* dropped, 2077.
 Hawe, *s.* awe, fear (?), 3705.
 Heddys-mene, *s.* chief men, rulers, 281.
 Hede-rapys, *s.* head-ropes, 3669.
 Hedlynge, *adv.* headlong, 3830.
 Hedoyne, *s.* a sauce, 184.
 Heldede, *v.* inclined, obeyed, 3369.
 Hele, *s.* health, comfort, 2631.
 Hemmes, *s.* borders, hems, 1648.
 Hende, *adv.* close at hand, 1283.
 Hende, *adj.* gentle, 2631, 3880.
 Hente, *s.* hold, 1842.
 Hentez, *v.* seizes, holds, 1132, 2918.
 Herbarjours, *s.* leaders, advanced guard, 2448.
 Herbergage, *s.* lodging, encampment, 3015.
 Herede, *adj.* covered with hair, 1083.
 Herne-pane, *s.* brain-pan, skull, 2229.
 Heslyne, *adj.* of hazel, 2504.
 Hete or hette, *v.* promise, 2127, 2632.
 Hethely, *adv.* contemptuously, 268.
 Hethynge, *s.* scorn, 1842.
 Hevede, *s.* head; 'appone-hevede,' head-foremost, 262.
 Hewede, *v.* carried, 4092.

Hey (*superl. hext*), *adj.* high, 166.
 Heyndly, *adv.* courteously, 15.
 Heynne (for *heþne* or *heþune*), *adv.* hence, 2436.
 Hillid, buried in the flesh, covered, 1120, 3607.
 Hirste or hurste, *s.* wood, 3370.
 Hodles, *v.* crawls, 2308.
 Hopes, *s.* valleys, 2503.
 Hovys, *v.* stay, remain, 377, 713.
 Hoursches, *v.* goes headlong, 2110.
 Hufe, *v.* rage, fuss, 1688.
 Huke, *s.* cloke, 734.
 Huke-nebbyde, *adj.* hook-nosed, 1082.
 Hulke, *s.* wretch, fellow, 1058, 1085.
 Hunde-fisch, *s.* dog-fish, 1084.
 Hurdace, *s.* scaffolding, platform, 3627.
 Hurdez, *v.* abides, 1010.
 Hyely, *adv.* loudly, 1058.
 Hyled, *v.* covered, 184.
 Hymlande, *adj.* encircling, hemming in, 2503.
 Hyngede, *v.* hanged, 281.
 Iche, *v.* rush, charge, 1411.
 Inmette, *s.* internals, 1122.
 Irous, *adj.* angry, passionate, 1329.
 Jaggede or joggede, *v.* pierced, 2910, 2892, 2894.
 Jambe, *adj.* capering, active (see *Rambe*), 2895.
 Japez, mocks, jests, 1398.
 Jeryne, *s.* piece of armour; 'jeryne of acres,' armour of Acre, 903.
 Joynter, *s.* joints of the armour, 2894.
 Justyfye, *v.* do justice to, 663.
 Kaunt, *adj.* bold, 2195.
 Kayre or cayre, *v.* go, journey, 6, 243, etc.
 Kele, *v.* cool, 1839.
 Kelle or calle, *s.* cap or coif, 3259.
 Kempe, *v.* contend for superiority, 2634.
 Kempis, *s.* knights, 1003.
 Kenet, *s.* a small hound, 122.
 Kerse, *s.* strength, temper of sword, 4195.
 Kest, *v.* cast, 118.
 Ketelle-hatte, *s.* helmet, 2094, 3996.
 Klevys, *s.* cliffs, 2396.
 Klokes, *s.* clutches, claws, 792.
 Kwne, *v.* give, 1565.
 Kyd or kydd, *adj.* famous, 96, etc.
 Kyrnelles, *s.* embattlements, 3047.
 Kystys, *s.* chests, coffers, 2302, 2336.
 Kyth, *s.* country, kingdom, 28, etc.
 Lached, *v.* stripped, 1515.
 Lade-sterne, *s.* load-star, leading or guiding star, 751.
 Lakes, *s.* locks, 2149.
 Lagere, *s.* couch, 2293.
 Laggene, *v.* tilt, 2542.
 Laghte or laughte, *v.* taken, 874, 1817, 1826.
 Late or lote, *s.* look, features, 248, 536, 1462.
 Lathe, *s.* ease, compliance, 458; "Be now lathe or lette," Be there compliance or opposition.
 Layke, *s.* sport, game, 1599.
 Layne, *v.* conceal, 2398, 2594.
 Layttede, *v.* sought, acquired, held to be in possession of, 254.
 Lechene, *v.* heal, cure, 2388.

Lechyde, *adj.* cut in slices, 188; *v.*
Lib. Cure Cocorum, pp. 13, 50.

Lede, *s.* lad, man, 138, etc.

Lemand, *adj.* glittering, gleaming, 2463, 2464.

Lendez, *s.* loins, 1047.

Lenge, *v.* lounge, delay, tarry, 72, 343.

Lesse, *v.* lose, 1599.

Lesse, *s.* lie, 159.

Letande, *v.* looking, 3832.

Letherly, *adv.* vilely, shamefully, 1268.

Leskes, *s.* flanks, 1097, 3280.

Leve, *v.* believe, 1099.

Levere, *s.* encampment, 3079.

Ligham, *s.* dead body, 3282, 4270.

Lire, *s.* flesh, face, 3282, 3955, 4273.

Lokerde, *adj.* distorted, 779.

Los or loosse, *s.* honour, praise, 254, 474.

Lothene, *adj.* hideous, 778.

Lowe, *s.* flame, heat, glare, 194.

Lowrande, *adj.* sad, gloomy, 1446.

Lowttede, *v.* worshipped, bowed down to, 3286.

Loyotour, *s.* embroidery, 3254.

Lufe, *s.* the loof of a ship, 744, 750.

Luffly, *adv.* lovingly, 248.

Lugge or lygge, *v.* lodge, lie, stay, remain, 152.

Lussche, *s.* violence, force, 3849.

Lutterde, *adj.* crooked, twisted, 779.

Luyschede, *v.* lashed out, 2226.

Lyarde, *adj.* disordered, 3281.

Lygmane, *s.* liegeman, 420.

Lympyde, *v.* happened, befell, 292, 875.

Lyth, *v.* listen, 12.
 "Thenne watz hit lif upon list to lythen the houndez."
 —(Sir Gawaine, 1719.)

Lythe, *adj.* gentle, smooth, 1517.

Lythe, *s.* land, property, kingdom, 994, 1653.

Lythyre, *s.* leader, ruler (?), 23.

Mangere, *s.* diet, keep of a prisoner, 1588.

Manrede, *s.* power, *lit.* homage, 127.

Masondewes, *s.* Maisons Dieu, hospitals, 3039.

Mele, *v.* speak, 382, 679.

Melle, *v.* mingle, communicate, 938.

Menske, *s.* honour, 126.

Menskes, *v.* deserves honour, 1303.

Merke, *v.* go, 427, etc.

Merkes, *s.* boundaries, 1147.

Mett, *v.* dreamed, 3224.

Mofes, *v.* overcomes, 3324.

Moles, *v.* 3057. See *Mele*.

Mone, *v.* shall (Prov. ? *mun*), 813.

Mowe, *v.* may, 3813.

Mysese (? plural of *myx*) *s.* wretches, 667.

Mysse, *s.* evil, wrong, 1315.

Myx, *s.* wretch, 989.

Naye, *s.* (yolke of a nay, for zolke of an aye=egg) 3284.

Nedys, *s.* needs, demands, 85.

Neyvesome, *adj.* renowned, 523.

Notez, *v.* make use of, 1815.

Notte, *s.* business, affair, 1816.

Nomene, *v.* taken, 1437.

Nurree, *s.* adopted child, 689.

Oches, *v.* breaks, 2565, 3676.

O-dawe, *adv.* out of days, *i.e.* out of life (see *Dawez*), 3737.

On-dreghe, *adv.* at a distance, 786, 787.
 Orfracez, *s.* embroideries, ornaments, 902, 2142.
 Ostayande, *v.* sojourning, 3503.
 Overlynge, *s.* superior, ruler, 289, 520.
 Ownd, *adj.* laced, slashed, 193.
 Owte, *adj.* foreign, 30.

Palle, *s.* fine cloth, 1288, 2478.
 Palyd, *v.* ornamented, 1287, 1375.
 Parc, *v.* injure, 4048.
 Pastorelles, *s.* shepherds, swine-herds, 3121.
 Paumes, *s.* hands, claws, 776.
 Pavys, *s.* a shield, 3461, 3626.
 Pavysers, *s.* soldiers armed with the pavys, 3005.
 Payses, *v.* force, 3038, 3043.
 Peghttes, *s.* Picts, 4126.
 Pensels, *s.* small banners, 1289, 2411.
 Perrye, *s.* jewellery, 2461, 3462.
 Pertyl, *adv.* apart, 2918.
 Pertyes, *v.* parts, 1925.
 Pillion (hat), *s.* priest's, or large hat.
 Pilour, *s.* pilferer, robber, 2133.
 Plasche, *s.* a marshy piece of ground, 2799.
 Plattes, *s.* planks for seats, 2478.
 Plumpe, *s.* crowd, 2199.
 Plyande, *v.* working, 777.
 Pome, *s.* the kingly globe, 3355.
 Pomelle, *s.* small globe at the head of a flag-staff, 1289.
 Poveralle, *adj.* poor, labouring men, 3121.
 Poyné, *v.* stitch with a bodkin, 2625.

Prys or pris, *adj.* precious, chief, 2, 569.
 Pyghte, *adj.* decked, garnished, pitched, 212, 1300, 2478.
 Pykes, *s.* points, 777.
 Pyne, *s.* lamentation, 3044.
 Pynne, *v.* pine, annoy, trouble, 4048.
 Qwarelles, *s.* short arrows for cross bow, 2103.
 Querte—‘in querte,’ equivalent to being in life; querte, joy, activity, life, 3811.
 Qwarte, *v.* quashed, smashed, 3390.
 Qwyke, *adj.* alive, 1736.
 Qwyne, *adv.* whence, 3504.
 Raas, *v.* tear, snatch, 362.
 Racches, *s.* scenting hounds, 4000.
 Rade, *adj.* afraid, 2882.
 Radly, *adv.* swiftly, 1529.
 Radness, *s.* fear, 120.
 Raike or rayke, *s.* path, 1525, 2986.
 Ramby or jambe, *adj.* prancing, spirited, 373, 2895.
 Ranez, *s.* rushes, 923.
 Raply, *adv.* quickly, 1763.
 Rared, *v.* roared, 784.
 Rasches, *v.* rush, go rashly, 2107.
 Rathe, rathely, or raythely, *adv.* quickly, soon, 237, 1275.
 Raw (on), *s.* in rotation, 633.
 Rawnsakes (*imp.*) *v.* search, 3229, 3740; probe, 4305.
 Raykede, *v.* rushed, flowed, ran, 237, 1057, 2984.
 Raylide, *v.* arrayed, ornamented, 3264.
 Raymede, *v.* roamed, made incursion, 100.

Reched, *s.* jewels, 3264.
 Reddour, *s.* violence, eagerness, succour, 109, 485, 1418.
 Rede, *v.* advise, 550.
 Redyne, *v.* disposed of, 52.
 Refede, *v.* deprived, 960.
 Rehetede, *v.* received, entertained, cheered, 221, 411, 3199.
 Reke, *s.* path, 1041.
 Relevis, *v.* rally, 2278.
 Remmes or remys, *v.* cries, laments, 2197, 4156.
 Renayede, *adj.* renegade, 2914, 3573.
 Renye, *s.* renegade, 2795.
 Rependez, *v.* hasten, 2107.
 Revaye, *v.* rejoice, 3276.
 Revare, *s.* river, 62.
 Rewe, *v.* have pity, 866.
 Rewfulle, *adj.* sorrowful, 1049.
 Reynes, *s.* journey, course, 3165.
 Rigg, *s.* back, 800.
 Rittes, *v.* rends, dashes in pieces, 2138, 3754, 3825.
 Rog, *s.* assembly, people? 3273.
 Roggede, *v.* rocked? 784.
 Romede, *v.* growl, roar, groan, 424, 784, 888.
 Roo, *s.* misfortune, evil, 1751.
 Roo, *s.* wheel, 3363, 3375.
 Roo, *s.* roe-deer, 922.
 Rosers, *s.* thickets, 923.
 Rosselde, *adj.* sharpened, 2881.
 Rowme or rowmme, *adj.* wide, loose, roomy, 432, 1454, 3471.
 Rusche, *v.* destroy, overthrow, 1339.
 Rusclede, *adj.* russet-clad, 1096.
 Ruyde, ruydly, or ruydlyche, *adj.* and *adv.* rude, rudely, fiercely, impetuously, 1049, 785, 1877.
 Rybys, *v.* rips, tears, 3825.
 Ryfez, *v.* thrusts, rives, tears, 1474, 2914.
 Ryghttez, *v.* See *Rittes*.
 Ryndez, *s.* thickets, 921, 1884, 3364.
 Rype, *v.* search, 3941.
 Ryste *adj.* rusty, rough, 1428.
 Ryvaye, *v.* hunt, 4000.
 Saghettyle, *v.* be satisfied or reconciled, 330.
 Sakeles, *adj.* innocent, without blame, 3400, 3987, 3994.
 Sale, *s.* hall, court, 82.
 Sandismene, *s.* messengers, 266, 1429.
 Saughte, *s.* peace, 1548, 3053.
 Saynned, *adj.* blessed, cared for, 966, 969.
 Schafte, *s.* spear, 2169.
 Schaftmonde, *s.* spear length, 2546.
 Schake, *v.* hasten, move, advance.
 Schalkes, *s.* men-at-arms, soldiers, 1857, 2211, 2333, 2456, 3748.
 Schalyde, *adj.* enclosed, 766.
 Schathe, scaith, or skaith, *s.* harm, mischief, 292.
 Schawes or shawes, *s.* glades, 1723, 1760, 1765.
 Schede, *v.* pour, 2923.
 Schenchipe, *s.* disgrace, 4300.
 Scherde, *v.* cut, wounded, destroyed, 1856, 2435.
 Schiltounis, *s.* bands, 1765, 1813, 1856.
 Schire, *adj.* scanty, 1760; clear, bright, 3845, 3846, 3601.
 Schoderide, *v.* shuddered, 2106.
 Schone, *v.* shrink, retreat, 314, 1717.

Schowande, *adj.* bending (*lit.* shoving), 1099.

Schrowde, *s.* dress, 3629.

Schreede, *v.* shred, sprinkled, 767.

Schrympe, *s.* monster, dragon, 767.

Schuntes or schountes, *v.* hesitates, delays, 1055.

Seche, *v.* seek, 3234.

Sektour, *s.* successor, follower, 665.

Segge, *s.* servant, man, follower, 134, 1420, 1422.

Selcouth, *adj.* wonderful, curious, 75, 1308, 3197.

Semblant, *s.* pomp, 75.

Semble, *v.* cope with, meet, 967.

Sendelle, *s.* a sort of silken stuff, 2299.

Serfed, *v.* deserved, 1068.

Sere, *adj.* several, 192, 607.

Serte, *s.* decree, 2927.

Sesyne or seizin, *s.* possession, 3589.

Sewand, *v.* following, 81.

Sewes, *s.* stews, made dishes, 192.
"Poure on the *sewe* and serve it."
(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)

Seyne (should be read *seyne*?), then, afterwards, 192, 464, 939.

Seyne, *s.* saint, 2871.

Seyne, *v.* boiled, cooked, 188.
"In *hir* own blood *seyne*."
(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)

Sirquytrie, *s.* pride, 3400.

Sittande, *adj.* fitting, becoming, 953.

Sittandly, *adv.* suitably, 159.

Skathelle or seathylle, *adj.* dangerous, 32, 1642.

Skathlye, *adj.* (should be read *skathelles*) without injury, 1562.

Skayres, *v.* frightens, 2468.

Skewe, *v.* rescue, 1562.

Skottefers, *s.* shooters.

Skowtte-waches, *s.* watchmen, 2468.

Skroggez, *s.* stunted bushes, scrub, 1642.

Skyst (should be read *skyft*?), shift, manage, arrange, 32, 1653.

Slakkes, *s.* pools, marshes, 3720.

Slale (should be read *skale*?), crafty, 3118.

Slawyne or slaveine, *s.* a pilgrim's mantle, 3475.

Sleghte, *s.* craft, sleight, 3419.

Slewthe, *s.* sloth, 3222.

Sleygly, *adj.* slyly, cunningly, 2976.

Slomowre, *s.* slumber, 3222.

Slope, *s.* valley, 2978.

Slote or slotte, *s.* pit of the stomach, 2254, 2976. See *Sir Gawaine* and *Glossary*.

Slottede, *v.* stabbed, 3856.

Slowde, *s.* mud, slush, 3720.

Slyke, *adj.* such; 'then was it slyke,' then was there such, 3720.

Snelle, *adj.* quick, swift, 57.

Sope, *s.* a sup or hasty repast, 1890.

Soppe, *s.* company, body, 1493, 3730, 3746.

Spakely, *adv.* quickly, 2063.

Spalldyd, *adj.* shivered, 3700.

Spayre, *s.* spare-rib, 2060.

Spekes, *s.* spokes, 3264.

Speltis, *s.* splinters, stripes, 3265.

Spencis, *s.* consumption, wasting, 3164.

Sprente, *v.* spurted, leapt, 2062, 3701.

Sproutez, *v.* sprawls, 2063.

Stale, *s.* company, band (*lit.* seat), 377, 1355.

Stamyne, *s.* deck, 3659.
 Stereborde, *s.* starboard, 745.
 Steryne, *adj.* stern, brave, 157, 377.
 Sterys, steers, guides, 917.
 Stirttelys (should be read *stightelys* ?, arrays), 3623.
 Stokes, *v.* strike, stab, 2554.
 Stotais, *v.* abide, delay, 1435.
 Stoundys, *v.* are placed, stand, 3624.
 Stowndys, *s.* times, 3889.
 Stour, *s.* war, fight, 377.
 Stowuntyng, *s.* stunting, stopping, 491.
 Strates, *s.* streets, paths, 561.
 Strekez, *v.* stretches, 1229, 3102.
 Streke, *adv.* quickly, 3102.
 Strenge, *s.* strong place, entrenchment, 1926.
 Struye, *v.* destroy, 561.
 Stuffe, *v.* treat, provision, 1932, 2369.
 Stye, *s.* path, 3467.
 Styghtylle or stightill, *v.* arrange, dispose of, 157.
 Sulayne, *adj.* sole, alone, 2593.
 Summes, *s.* assemblies, hosts, 606.
 Surepel, *s.* cover, case, 3318.
 Surrawns, *s.* assurance, treaty, 3182.
 Surs, *s.* rising, 1978, 2511.
 Suters, *s.* stalls, 501.
 Swafres or swayfres, *v.* starts, 3971.
 Swange, *s.* loins, groin, 1129.
 Swanke (*pret.* of swinke), *v.* toil, labour, hence strike with sword, 2962, 3362.
 Swape, *s.* stroke, blow, 314.
 Swarthe, *s.* sward, 1126.
 Swayne, *s.* swain, man, 3361.
 Swefennys, *s.* dreams, 3229.
 Swefnyng, *s.* sleep, dreaming, 759, 812.
 Sweperly, *adv.* swiftly, 1128, 1465.
 Swelite, *v.* faint, die, 813, 2962, 2983, 1465, 1466.
 Sweys, *v.* descends, falls, 57, 1467.
 Swier, *s.* squire, 2960, 3704.
 Swoghe, *s.* sound, 759.
 Swowynge, *s.* sound of running water, 931.
 Swtte, swete or swett, life, 2145, 3361. See Glossary to *Alliterative Poems*.
 Swykede, *v.* deceived, failed, 1795, 3362.
 Swym, *s.* swoon, 4247.
 Swynge, *s.* blow, 3361.
 Swyngene, *v.* overthrow, hurled down, 1466.
 Swyre-bane, *s.* neck-bone, 2960.
 Swythe, *adj.* quick, 409, 813, 1128.
 Sybbe, *adj.* near of kin, 645, 681.
 Sybredyne, *s.* kindred, 691, 4146.
 Sydlynges or syddynges, *adv.* sideways, sidelong, 1039, 1243.
 Sylande, *v.* gliding, 1297, 3795.
 Syte or sytte, *s.* grief, sorrow, shame, 1060, 1305.
 Sythyne or sithen, *adv.* afterwards, then, 56, 159, 169, 184.
 Tachemente, *s.* appurtenances, belongings, 1568.
 Tachesesede, *v.* attached, 821.
 Taghte, *adj.* courteous, well-trained, 178.
 Takelle, *s.* tackle? 3619.
 Talmes, *v.* is disheartened (*lit.* benumb, deaden), 2581.

Targe, *s.* document, paper, 89.
 Temez, *v.* pours, empties, 1801.
 Tempest, *v.* act violently, 2408.
 Tene, *v.* grieve, 264.
 Tene, *s.* sorrow, 1956.
 Thee, *s.* thigh, 1846.
 Thirllede, *v.* pierced, 1858.
 Thole, *v.* suffer, endure, permit, 676.
 Thraa or throo, *adj.* bold, 249, 3295,
 3296.
 Thrawe, *s.* agony, struggle, 1150.
 Threppede, *v.* rushed, forced his
 way, 2216.
 Throly, *adv.* fiercely, severely,
 2217.
 Thrynges, *v.* grips, 1150; struggles,
 fights, 2217.
 Thrystez, *v.* thrusts, 1151.
 Thursse, *s.* giant, 1100. (Still
 used in E. Ang. counties.)
 Tide, *s.* season, fitness, right, 275.
 Togers, *s.* coats, 178, 3190.
 Tolowris, *s.* tiller of a boat (?),
 3619.
 To-rattys, *v.* tear, rend, scatter,
 2235.
 Torfere, *s.* torture, trouble, pun-
 ishment, 1956.
 To-stonayede, *adj.* confounded, as-
 tonished, 1436.
 Towyne, *v.* tow, draw, 3656.
 Towne, *adj.* well trained, 178.
 (Still exists in *wan-ton*.)
 Toyelys, *s.* tools, furniture, weapons,
 732, 3617.
 Traise, *v.* go, 1629.
 Traylede, *v.* dragged, drawn, 250.
 Trayne, *s.* stratagem, turn, 1630.
 Trayste, *v.* trusts, 1987.
 Traystely, *adv.* safely, trustily,
 1976.

Trete, *s.* row, 3656.
 Trett, *v.* treat, 249, 250, 263.
 Treunt, *v.* march, hasten, 1976,
 2017, 3901.
 Trewe, *s.* truce, 3192.
 Tristly, *adv.* safely, 731.
 Trofelande, *adj.* trifling, 1683.
 Trome, *v.* array in order of battle,
 3593.
 Troufflyng, *s.* idle words, 114.
 Trufies, *s.* lies, 89.
 Trussez, *v.* pack up, load, 731,
 1976, 3593.
 Tryede *v.* (read *trynedē*), went,
 3592.
 Tryne or trine (pret. *tron*), *v.* to
 go in procession or order, 1757,
 3193, 3593.
 Tydd, *v.* befallen, fared, 3655.
 Tykes, *s.* dogs (applied to men),
 3643.
 Tymbyrde, *v.* contrived, fashioned,
 3743.
 Tyne, *v.* lose, 2934, 1954.
 Tynt (pret. of *tyne*), lost, killed,
 272, 770.
 Tyte, *adv.* quickly, 737.
 Umbeclappes, *v.* embraces, clasps,
 surrounds, 1779, 1819.
 Umbrele, *s.* visor, 943.
 Undroune, *s.* nine o'clock a.m. 463.
 Unfaire, *adv.* badly, horribly, 1045.
 Unfawghte (read *unsoughte*, q.v.).
 Unfaye, *adj.* unwounded, alive,
 2797.
 Unfers, *adj.* weak, feeble, 4123.
 Unfoundyde, *adj.* untried, unstable,
 2485.
 Unfraystede, *adj.* untried, inex-
 perienced, 2737.

Unfrely, *adj.* vilely, 780.
 Unsaughte, *adj.* at strife, 1306, 1457.
 Unsaughtely, *adv.* unfriendly, 1501.
 Unslely (for *unseely*), miserably, 979.
 Unsownde, *adj.* dead, slain, wounded, 3932, 3943, 4295.
 Unwemmyde, *adj.* spotless, 3802.
 Unwlynly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 955.
 Upcynes, *s.* pinnacles, turrets? 3676.
 Utters, *v.* ushers, conducts, 418.
 Vernacle, *s.* the holy picture of Christ supposed to be miraculously emprinted on a handkerchief, 297, 309, 348.
 Verrede, *v.* covered, 2573.
 Vertly, *adv.* secretly? 3169.
 Viage, *s.* journey, march, 2037.
 Voute, *s.* mien, expression, 137.
 Vyse, *s.* aim, 2612, 2424.
 Wache, *v.* watch, 547, 613.
 Wage, *v.* engage, hire, 547.
 Wagge, *v.* move, lead, 333, 1615.
 Wale, *adj.* beautiful, noble, choice, 182? 741, 2148.
 Wale, *s.* gun-wale, side of ship, 740.
 Walkyne, *s.* welkin, sky, 787.
 Walopande, *adj.* swift, galloping, 2828.
 Walowes, *v.* rolls, 1142.
 Wandrethe, *s.* trouble, grief, 323, 384, 2370, 3158.
 Wandsomdly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 4013.
 Waresche, *v.* recover, be healed, 2186.
 Warlow or werlaugge, *s.* warlock, unnatural wretch, traitor, 1140, 3772.
 Warne, *v.* deny, forbid, refuse, 700.
 Wasterne, *s.* desert, 3234.
 W athe or wawhte, injury, danger, 2669, 3234, 3481.
 Wathely, *adv.* dangerously, 2090.
 Watte, *v.* I watte = wot, believe, 2224.
 Wayfe, *v.* wander, stray, 960.
 Waykly, *adj.* weakly, sorrowfully, 697.
 Wekyrly, *adv.* badly, 2104.
 Welters, *v.* rolls, 890, 1140.
 Wenez, *v.* thinkest, 963.
 Weredes or werdes, *s.* destinies, fate, 385, 3890.
 Werkande, *adj.* aching, sore, 2148.
 Werkkes, *v.* aches, 2690.
 Werraye, *v.* make war, 546.
 Werpe or warpe, *v.* throw out, utter, 9, 150.
 Wery, *v.* curse, 699, 959.
 Wiet, *v.* know, 420.
 Wightenez, *s.* valour, 1806.
 Wille, *adj.* lonely, 3837.
 Willed, *adj.* astray, 3231.
 Wlonke, *adj.* fair, 3155, 3339.
 Wodely, *adv.* madly, 2828.
 Wodewyse, *s.* madman, 3818.
 Wolfe-hevede, *s.* outlaw, 1093.
 Wone, *s.* abode, dwelling, 1300, 2472.
 Woonde or wonde, *v.* delay, stop, 1615.
 Worthe, *v.* be; 'mote þe werthe,' may ye be, 4089, 4105.
 Wraythe, *v.* thrust, twisted, 1093.
 Wrethe, *s.* anger, wrath, 2225.

Wrokyne, *v.* avenged, 2225.
 Wrothely, *adv.* fiercely, 1141.
 Wrotherayle, *s.* ill-fate, 3155.
 Wrythyne, *v.* struggle, 1141.
 Wyderwyne, *s.* enemy, 2045.
 Wyes or wye (sing. *wy* or *wye*),
 men, 56, 533.
 Wyghte, *adj.* quick, 1615.
 Wyghte, *s.* man, 959.
 Wyghtly, *adv.* quickly, 70.
 Wyghtnesse, *s.* quickness, vigor,
 boldness, 258.
 Wylnez, *v.* desires, wishes, 962.
 Wynche, *v.* flinch, 2104.
 Wynly, *adv.* pleasantly, 3339.

Wynlyche, *adj.* handsome, pleasant, 181.
 Ythez, *s.* waves, 741, 747.
 ȝapely, *adv.* quickly, 1502.
 ȝernez, *v.* holds, keeps, 1938.
 ȝermys, *v.* screams, cries, 3912.
 ȝernez, *v.* desirest, 1502.
 ȝitt, *adv.* yet, 1424, 1435.
 ȝoldene, *v.* yielded, 2482.
 ȝole, *s.* Yule, Christmas, 1629.
 ȝomane, *s.* yeoman, 2629.
 ȝorke (read ȝoske), *cry, sob*, 3912.



